THE

LIFE

AND

OPINIONS

OF

TRISTRAM SHANDY,

GENTLEMAN.

Ταραττει τὺς Ἀνθρώπυς ὺ τὰ πράγματα, αλλα τὰ περι τῶν πραγματων, δογματα.

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B M

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

MR. PITT.

SIR,

NEVER poor Wight of a Dedicator had leſs hopes from his dedicaiton, than I have from this of mine; for it is written in a bye corner of the kingdom, and in a retired thatch'd houſe, where I live in a conſtant endeavour to fence againſt the infirmities of ill health, and other evils of life, by mirth; being firmly perſuaded that every time a man ſmiles---but much more ſo, when he laughs, that it adds ſomething to this fragment of Life.

DEDICATION.

I humbly beg, Sir, that you will honour this book by taking it---(not under your protection, ---it muſt protect itſelf, but)--- into the country with you; where, if I am ever told, it has made you ſmile, or can conceive it has beguiled you of one moment's pain ---I ſhall think myſelf as happy as a miniſter of ſtate---perhaps much happier than any one (one only excepted) that I have ever read or heard of.

I am, great Sir,

(and what is more to your honour,)

I am, good Sir,

Your Well-wiſher,

and moſt humble Fellow-Subject,

THE AUTHOR.

THE

LIFE and OPINIONS

OF

TRISTRAM SHANDY, Gent.

CHAP. I.

I WISH either my father or my mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly conſidered how much depended upon what they were then doing;——— that not only the production of a rational being was concerned in it, but that poſſibly the happy formation and temperature of his body, perhaps his genius, and the very caſt of his mind;—and, for aught they knew to the contrary, even the fortunes of his whole houſe, might take their turn from the humours and diſpoſitions which were then uppermoſt:—Had they duly weighed and conſidered all this, and proceeded accordingly,—I am verily perſuaded I ſhould have made a quite different figure in the world, from that, in which the reader is likely to ſee me—Believe me, good folks, this is not ſo inconſiderable a thing as many of you may think it;—you have all, I dare ſay, heard of the animal ſpirits, as how they are tranſfuſed from father to ſon, &c. &c.——and a great deal to that purpoſe:—Well, you may take my word, that nine parts in ten of a man's ſenſe or his nonſenſe, his ſucceſſes and his miſcarriages in this world, depend upon their motions and activity, and the different tracks and trains you put them into; ſo that when they are once ſet a going, whether right or wrong, 'tis not a halfpenny matter,—away they go cluttering like hey-go-mad, and by treading the ſame ſteps over and over again, they preſently

make a road of it, as plain and as ſmooth as a garden-walk, which, when they are once uſed to, the Devil himſelf ſometimes ſhall not be able to drive them off it.

Pray, my dear, quoth my mother, *have you not forgot to wind up the clock?—Good G—!* cried my father, making an exclamation, but taking care to moderate his voice at the ſame time———*Did ever woman, ſince the creation of the world, interrupt a man with ſuch a ſilly queſtion?* Pray, what was your father ſaying?—Nothing.

CHAP. II.

———Then, poſitively, there is nothing in the queſtion, that I can ſee, either good or bad.———Then let me tell you, Sir, it was a very unſeaſonable queſtion at leaſt———becauſe it ſcattered and diſperſed the animal ſpirits, whoſe buſineſs it was to have eſcorted and gone hand-in-hand with the *HOMUNCULUS*, and conducted him ſafe to the place deſtined for his reception.

The HOMUNCULUS, Sir, in how ever low and ludicrous a light it may appear, in this age of levity, to the eye of folly or prejudice;—to the eye of reaſon in ſcientific reſearch, he ſtands confeſſed———a BEING guarded and circumſcribed with rights:——The minuteſt philoſophers, who, by the bye, have the moſt enlarged underſtandings (their ſouls being inverſely as their enquiries) ſhew us inconteſtably, That the HOMUNCULUS, is created by the ſame hand,——engendered in the ſame courſe of nature,———endowed with the ſame locomotive powers and faculties with us:———That he conſiſts, as we do, of ſkin, hair, fat, fleſh, veins, arteries, ligaments, nerves, cartilages, bones, marrow, brains, glands, genitals, humours, and articulations;——is a being of as much activity,———and in all ſenſes of the word, as much and as truly our fellow creature as my Lord Chancellor of England———He may be benefited, he may be injured,———he may obtain redreſs;—in a word, he has all the claims and rights of humanity, which *Tully*, *Puffendorf*, or the beſt ethick writers allow to ariſe out of that ſtate and relation.

Now,

Now, dear Sir, what if any accident had befallen him in his way alone?—or that, through terror of it, natural to ſo young a traveller, my little gentleman had got to his journey's end miſerably ſpent;—his muſcular ſtrength and virility worn down to a thread;—his own animal ſpirits ruffled beyond deſcription,——and that in this ſad diſordered ſtate of nerves, he had laid down a prey to ſudden ſtarts, or a ſeries of melancholy dreams and fancies, for nine long months together.——I tremble to think what a foundation had been laid for a thouſand weakneſſes both of body and mind, which no ſkill of the phyſician or the philoſopher could ever afterwards have ſet thoroughly to rights.

CHAP. III.

TO my uncle Mr. *Toby Shandy* do I ſtand indebted for the preceding anecdote, to whom my father, who was an excellent natural philoſopher, and much given to cloſe reaſoning upon the ſmalleſt matters, had oft, and heavily complained of the injury; but once more particularly, as my uncle *Toby* well remembered, upon his obſerving a moſt unaccountable obliquity, (as he called it) in my manner of ſetting up my top, and juſtifying the principles upon which I had done it,——the old gentleman ſhook his head, and in a tone more expreſſive by half of ſorrow than reproach,——he ſaid his heart all along foreboded, and he ſaw it verified in this, and from a thouſand other obſervations he had made upon me, That I ſhould neither think nor act like any other man's child:——*But alas!* continued he, ſhaking his head a ſecond time, and wiping away a tear which was trickling down his cheeks, *My Triſtram's misfortunes began nine months before ever he came into the world.*

——My mother who was ſitting by, looked up——but ſhe knew no more than her backſide what my father meant;——but my uncle Mr. *Toby Shandy*, who had been often informed of the affair,—underſtood him very well.

CHAP. IV.

I KNOW there are readers in the world, as well as many other good people in it, who are no readers at all, ——— who find themſelves ill at eaſe, unleſs they are let into the whole ſecret, from firſt to laſt, of every thing which concerns you.

It is in pure compliance with this humour of theirs, and from a backwardneſs in my nature to diſappoint any one ſoul living, that I have been ſo very particular already. As my Life and Opinions are likely to make ſome noiſe in the world, and, if I conjecture right, will take in all ranks, profeſſions, and denominations of men whatever,—be no leſs read than the *Pilgrim's Progreſs* itſelf—and, in the end, prove the very thing which *Montaigne* dreaded his eſſays ſhould turn out, that is, a book for a parlour window;—I find it neceſſary to conſult every one a little in his turn; and therefore muſt beg pardon for going on a little further in the ſame way: For which cauſe right glad I am, that I have begun the hiſtory of myſelf in the way I have done; and that I am able to go on tracing every thing in it, as *Horace* ſays, *ab Ovo*.

Horace, I know, does not recommend this faſhion altogether: But that gentleman is ſpeaking only of an epic poem or a tragedy;—(I forget which)—beſides, if it was not ſo, I ſhould beg Mr. *Horace*'s pardon;—for in writing what I have ſet about, I ſhall confine myſelf neither to his rules, nor to any man's rules that ever lived.

To ſuch, however, as do not chooſe to go ſo far back into theſe things, I can give no better advice, than that they ſkip over the remaining part of this chapter; for I declare before-hand, 'tis wrote only for the curious and inquiſitive.

———Shut the door,———I was begot in the night, betwixt the firſt *Sunday* and the firſt *Monday* in the month of *March*, in the year of our Lord one thouſand ſeven hundred and eighteen. I am poſitive I was.—But how I came to be ſo very particular in my account of a thing which happened before I was born, is owing to another ſmall anecdote known only

only in our own family but now made publick for the better clearing up this point.

My father, you muſt know, who was originally a *Turkey* merchant, but had left off buſineſs for ſome years, in order to retire to, and die upon his paternal eſtate in the county of————, was, I believe, one of the moſt regular men in every thing he did, whether 'twas matter of buſineſs, or matter of amuſement, that ever lived. As a ſmall ſpecimen of this extreme exactneſs of his, to which he was in truth a ſlave,——he had made it a rule for many years of his life,—on the firſt *Sunday night* of every month throughout the whole year,—as certain as ever the *Sunday night* came—to wind up a large houſe-clock, which we had ſtanding upon the back-ſtairs head, with his own hands:—And being ſomewhere between fifty and ſixty years of age, at the time I have been ſpeaking of,—he had likewiſe gradually brought ſome other little family concernments to the ſame period, in order, as he would often ſay to my uncle *Toby*, to get them all out of the way at one time, and be no more plagued and peſtered with them the reſt of the month.

It was attended but with one misfortune, which in a great meaſure fell upon myſelf, and the effects of which I fear I ſhall carry with me to my grave, namely, that from an unhappy aſſociation of ideas which have no connection in nature, it ſo fell out at length, that my poor mother could never hear the ſame clock wound up,—but the thoughts of ſome other things unavoidably popped into her head,—*& vice verſa*, which ſtrange combination of ideas, the ſagacious *Locke*, who certainly underſtood the nature of theſe things better than moſt men, affirms to have produced more wry actions than all other ſources of prejudice whatſoever.

But this by the bye.

Now it appears, by a memorandum in my father's pocket book, which now lies upon the the table, "That on *Lady-day*, which was on the 25th of the ſame month in which I date my geniture,—my father ſet out upon his journey to *London* with my eldeſt brother *Bobby*, to fix him at *Weſtminſter* ſchool;" and, as it appears from the ſame authority, "That he did not get down to his

wife and family till the *ſecond week* in *May* following," it brings the thing almoſt to a certainty. However what follows in the beginning of the next chapter put it beyond all poſſibility of doubt.

———But pray, Sir, what was your father doing all *December*, *January*, and *February?*—Why, Madam, ——he was all that time afflicted with a Sciatica.

CHAP. V.

ON the 5th day of *November*, 1718, which to the æra fixed on, was as near nine kalendar months as any huſband could in reaſon have expected,—was I *Triſtram Shandy*, Gentleman, brought forth into this ſcurvy and diſaſtrous world of ours.—I wiſh I had been born in the moon, or in any of the planets, (except *Jupiter* or *Saturn*,) becauſe I never could bear cold weather, for it could not well have fared worſe with me in any of them (tho' I will not anſwer for *Venus*) than it has in this vile dirty planet of ours,—which o'my conſcience, with reverence be it ſpoken, I take to be made up of the ſhreds and clippings of the reſt;—not but the planet is well enough, provided a man could be born in it to a great title or to a great eſtate; or could any how contrive to be called up to public charges, and employments of dignity and power;——but that is not my caſe: and therefore every man will ſpeak of the fair as his own market has gone in it;—for which cauſe I affirm it over again to be one of the vileſt worlds that ever was made;—for I can truly ſay, that from the firſt hour I drew my breath in it, to this, that I can now ſcarce draw it at all, for an aſthma I got in ſcating againſt the wind in *Flanders*;—I have been the continual ſport of what the world calls Fortune, and though I will not wrong her by ſaying, ſhe has ever made me feel the weight of any great and ſignal evil;—yet with all the good temper in the world, I affirm it of her, That in every ſtage of my life, and at every turn and corner where ſhe could get fairly at me, the ungracious Dutcheſs has pelted me with a ſet of as pitiful miſadventures and croſs accidents as ever ſmall HERO ſuſtained.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IN the beginning of the laſt chapter I informed you exactly *when* I was born;—but I did not inform you *how*. *No*, that particular was reſerved entirely for a chapter by itſelf;—beſides, Sir, as you and I are in a manner perfect ſtrangers to each other, it would not have been proper to have let you into too many circumſtances relating to myſelf all at once.——You muſt have a little patience. I have undertaken, you ſee, to write not only my life, but my opinions alſo; hoping and expecting that your knowledge of my character, and of what kind of a mortal I am, by the one, would give you a better reliſh for the other: As you proceed further with me, the ſlight acquaintance which is now beginning betwixt us, will grow into familiarity; and that, unleſs one of us is in fault, will terminate in friendſhip——*O diem præclarum!*——then nothing which has touched me will be thought trifling in its nature, or tedious in its telling. Therefore, my dear friend and companion, if you ſhould think me ſomewhat ſparing of my narrative on my firſt ſetting out,—bear with me,—and let me go on, and tell my ſtory my own way:——or if I ſhould ſeem now and then to trifle upon the road, or ſhould ſometimes put on a fool's cap with a bell to it for a moment or two as we paſs along,—don't fly off,——but rather courteouſly give me credit for a little more wiſdom than appears on my outſide;—and as we jogg on, either laugh with me, or at me, or in ſhort, do any thing,—only keep your temper.

CHAP. VII.

IN the ſame village where my father and mother dwelt, dwelt alſo a thin, upright, motherly, notable, good old body of a midwife, who, with the help of a little plain good ſenſe, and ſome years full employment in her buſineſs, in which ſhe had all along truſted little to her own efforts, and a great deal to thoſe of dame nature,——had acquired in her way, no ſmall degree

degree of reputation in the world;—by which word *world*, need I in this place inform your worſhip, that I would be underſtood to mean no more of it, than a ſmall circle deſcribed upon the circle of the great world of four *Engliſh* miles diameter, or thereabouts, of which the cottage where the good old woman lived, is ſuppoſed to be the centre.——She had been left, it ſeems, a widow in great diſtreſs, with three or four ſmall children, in her forty-ſeventh year; and as ſhe was at that time a perſon of decent carriage,—grave deportment,———a woman moreover of few words, and withal an object of compaſſion, whoſe diſtreſs and ſilence under it called out the louder for a friendly lift: the wife of the parſon of the pariſh was touch'd with pity; and having often lamented an inconvenience, to which her huſband's flock had for many years been expoſed, inaſmuch, as there was no ſuch thing as a midwife, of any kind or degree to be got at, let the caſe have been never ſo urgent, within leſs than ſix or ſeven long miles riding: which ſaid ſeven long miles in dark nights and diſmal roads, the country thereabouts being nothing but a deep clay, was almoſt equal to fourteen; and that in effect was ſometimes next to having no midwife at all; it came into her head, that it would be doing as ſeaſonable a kindneſs to the whole pariſh, as to the poor creature herſelf, to get her a little inſtructed in ſome of the plain principles of the buſineſs, in order to ſet her up in it. As no woman thereabouts was better qualified to execute the plan ſhe had formed than herſelf, the gentlewoman very charitably undertook it; and having great influence over the female part of the pariſh, ſhe found no difficulty in effecting it to the utmoſt of her wiſhes. In truth, the parſon joined his intereſt with his wife's in the whole affair, and in order to do things as they ſhould be, and give the poor ſoul as good a title by law to practice as his wife had given by inſtitution,—he chearfully paid the fees for the ordinary's licenſe himſelf, amounting in the whole to the ſum of eighteen ſh llings and four pence; ſo that betwixt them both, the good woman was fully inveſted in the real and corporal poſſeſſion of her office,

to ge-

together with all its *rights, members and appurtenances whatſoever.*

Theſe laſt words, you muſt know, were not accor ding to the old form in which ſuch licences, faculties, and powers uſually ran, which in like caſes had heretofore been granted to the ſiſterhood. But it was according to a neat *Formula* of *Didius* his own deviſing, who having a particular turn for taking to pieces, and new framing over again, all kind of inſtruments in that way, not only hit upon this dainty amendment, but coaxed many of the old licenſed matrons in the neighbourhood, to open their faculties afreſh, in order to have this whim-wham of his inſerted.

I own I never could envy *Didius* in theſe kinds of fancies of his:—But every man to his own taſte.—Did not Dr. *Kunaſtrokius*, that great man, at his leiſure hours, take the greateſt delight imaginable in combing of aſſes tales, and plucking the dead hairs out with his teeth, though he had tweezers always in his pocket? Nay, if you come to that, Sir, have not the wiſeſt men in all ages, not excepting *Solomon* himſelf,—have they not had their HOBBY-HORSES;—their running horſes,—their coins and their cockle-ſhells, their drums and their trumpets, their fiddles, their pallets—their maggots and their butterflies?————and ſo long as a man rides his HOBBY HORSE peaceably and quietly along the King's highway, and neither compels you or me to get up behind him,——Pray, Sir, what have either you or I to do with it?

CHAP. VIII.

————*De guſtibus non eſt diſputandum:*————

that is, there is no diſputing againſt HOBBY-HORSES; and, for my part, I ſeldom do; nor could I with any ſort of grace had I been an enemy to them at the bottom, for happening at certain intervals and changes of the Moon, to be both fiddler and painter, according as the fly ſtings:—Be it known to you, that I keep a couple of pads myſelf, upon which in their turns, (nor do I care who knows it) I frequently ride out and take the air;—tho' ſometimes to my ſhame be it ſpoken, I take

take ſomewhat longer journies than what a wiſe man would think altogether right, but the truth is,—I am not a wiſe man;———and beſides am a mortal of ſo little conſequence in the world, it is not much matter what I do; ſo I ſeldom fret or fume at all or about it: Nor does it much diſturb my reſt, when I ſee ſuch great lords and tall perſonages as hereafter follow,—ſuch, for inſtance, as my Lord A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, and ſo on, all of a row, mounted upon their ſeveral horſes;—ſome with large ſtirrups, getting on in a more grave and ſober pace;—others on the contrary, tuck'd up to their very chins, with whips acroſs their mouths, ſcourging and ſcampering it away like ſo many little party-coloured devils aſtride a mortgage—and as if ſome of them were reſolved to break their necks.—So much the better—ſay I to myſelf;———for in caſe the worſt ſhould happen, the world would make a ſhift to do excellently well without them;—and for the reſt,—why,———God ſpeed them,———e'en let them ride on without any oppoſition from me; for were their lordſhips unhorſed this very night———'tis ten to one but that many of them would be worſe mounted by one half before to-morrow morning.

Not many of theſe inſtances therefore can be ſaid to break in upon my reſt.—But there is an inſtance, which I own puts me off my guard, and that is when I ſee one born for great actions, and, what is ſtill more for his honour, whoſe nature ever inclines him to good ones—when I behold ſuch a one, my Lord, like yourſelf, whoſe principles and conduct are as generous and noble as his blood, and whom for that reaſon a corrupt world cannot ſpare one moment;—when I ſee ſuch a one, my Lord, mounted, though it is but for a minute beyond the time which my love to my country has preſcribed to him, and my zeal for his glory wiſhes,—then, my Lord, I ceaſe to be a philoſopher, and in the firſt tranſport of an honeſt impatience, I wiſh the HOBBY-HORSE with all his fraternity at the Devil.

" My Lord,

" I Maintain this to be a dedication, notwithſtanding " its ſingularity in the three great eſſentials, of

" matter,

" matter, form, and place: I beg, therefore, you will " accept it as ſuch, and that you will permit me to " lay it, with the moſt reſpectful humility, at your " Lordſhip's feet,——— when you are upon them, " ———which you can be when you pleaſe ;—— " and that is, my Lord, whenever there is occaſion " for it, and I will add, to the beſt purpoſes too. I " have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient,

and moſt devoted,

and moſt humble ſervant,

TRISTRAM SHANDY.

CHAP. IX.

I Solemnly declare to all mankind, that the above dedication was made for no one Prince, Prelate, Pope, or Potentate,—Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viſcount, or Baron, of this or any other Realm in Chriſtendom ; ———nor has it yet been hawk'd about, or offered publickly or privately, directly or indirectly, to any one perſon or perſonage, great or ſmall; but is honeſtly a true Virgin-Dedication untried on, upon any ſoul living.

I labour this point ſo particularly, merely to remove any offence or objection which might ariſe againſt it, from the manner in which I propoſe to make the moſt of it ;———which is the putting it up fairly to publick ſale; which I now do.

———Every author has a way of his own in bringing his points to bear ;—for my own part, as I hate chaffering and higgling for a few guineas in a dark entry;———I reſolved within myſelf, from the very beginning, to deal ſquarely and openly with your Great Folks in this affair, and try whether I ſhould not come off the better by it.

If therefore there is any one Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viſcount, or Baron, in theſe his Majeſty's dominions, who ſtands in need of a tight genteel dedication, and

whom

whom the above will ſuit, (for by the bye, unleſs it ſuits in ſome degree, I will not part with it)——— it is much at his ſervice for fifty guineas; ——which I am poſitive is twenty guineas leſs than it ought to be afforded for, by any man of genius.

My Lord, if you examine it over again, it is far from being a groſs piece of daubing, as ſome dedications are. The deſign, your Lordſhip ſees, is good, the colouring tranſparent,—the drawing not amiſs;—or to ſpeak more like a man of ſcience,—and meaſure my piece in the painter's ſcale, divided into 20,—I believe, my Lord, the out lines will turn out as 12, ——the compoſition as 9,—the colouring as 6,—the expreſſion 13 and a half,—and the deſign,——if I may be allowed, my Lord, to underſtand my own *deſign*, and ſuppoſing abſolute perfection in deſigning, to be as 20,——I think it cannot well fall ſhort of 19. Beſides all this,—there is keeping in it, and the dark ſtrokes in the HOBBY-HORSE, (which is a ſecondary figure, and a kind of back-ground to the whole) give great force to the principal lights in your own figure, and make it come off wonderfully;———and beſides there is an air of originality in the *tout enſemble*.

Be pleaſed, my good Lord, to order the ſum to be paid into the hands of Mr. *Dodſley*, for the benefit of the author; and in the next edition care ſhall be taken that this chapter be expunged, and your Lordſhip's titles, diſtinctions, arms and good actions, be placed at the front of the preceding chapter: All which from the words, *De guſtibus non eſt diſputandum*, and whatever elſe in this book relates to HOBBY-HORSES, but no more, ſhall ſtand dedicated to your Lordſhip.—The reſt I dedicate to the MOON, who, by the bye, of all the PATRONS or MATRONS I can think of, has moſt power to ſet my book a going, and make the world run mad after it.

Bright Goddeſs.

If thou art not too buſy with CANDID and Miſs CUNEGUND's affairs,—take *Triſtram Shandy*'s under thy protection alſo.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

WHatever degree of ſmall merit, the act of benignity in favour of the midwife, might juſtly claim, or in whom that claim truly reſted,—at firſt ſight ſeems not very material to this hiſtory;—certain however it was, that the gentlewoman, the parſon's wife, did run away at that time with the whole of it: And yet, for my life, I cannot help thinking but that the parſon himſelf, tho' he had not the good fortune to hit upon the deſign firſt,—yet as he heartily concured in it the moment it was laid before him, and as heartily parted with his money to carry it into execution, had a claim to ſome ſhare of it,—if not to a full half of whatever honour was due to it.

The world at that time was pleaſed to determine the matter otherwiſe.

Lay down the book, and I will allow you half a day to give a probable gueſs at the grounds of this procedure

Be it known then, that for about five years before the date of the midwife's licenſe, of which you have had ſo circumſtantial an account,——the parſon we have to do with, had made himſelf a country-talk, by a breach of all decorum, which he had committed againſt himſelf, his ſtation, and his office;—and that was in never appearing better, or otherwiſe mounted, than upon a lean, ſorry, jack-aſs of an horſe, value about one pound fifteen ſhillings; who, to ſhorten all deſcription of him, was full brother to *Roſinante*, as far as ſimilitude congenial could make him; for he anſwered his deſcription to a hair-breadth in every thing,—except that I do not remember 'tis any where ſaid, that *Roſinante* was broken-winded, and that, moreover, *Roſinante*, as is the happineſs of moſt *Spaniſh* horſes fat or lean,—was undoubtedly a horſe at all points.

I know very well that the HERO's horſe was a horſe of chaſte deportment, which may have given grounds for a contrary opinion: But it is certain at the ſame time, that *Roſinante*'s continency (as may be demonſtrated from the adventure of the *Yanguеſian* carriers)

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proceeded from no bodily defect or cauſe whatſoever, but from the temperance and orderly current of his blood,——and let me tell you, Madam, there is a great deal of very good chaſtity in the world, in behalf of which you could not ſay more for your life.

Let that be as it may, as my purpoſe is to do exact juſtice to every creature brought upon the ſtage of this dramatic work—I could not ſtifle this diſtinction in favour of Don *Quixote*'s horſe;——in all other points the parſon's horſe, I ſay, was juſt ſuch another,—for he was as lean, and as lank, and as ſorry a jade, as HUMILITY herſelf could have beſtrided.

In the eſtimation of here and there a man of weak judgment, it was greatly in the parſon's power to have helped the figure of this horſe of his, for he was maſter of a very handſome demi-peak'd ſaddle, quilted on the ſeat with green pluſh, garniſhed with a double row of ſilver-headed ſtuds, and a noble pair of ſhining braſs ſtirrups, with a hooſing altogether ſuitable, of grey ſuperfine cloth, with an edging of black lace, terminating in a deep black ſilk fringe, *poudre d'or*,—all which he had purchaſed in the pride and prime of his life, together with a grand emboſſed bridle, ornamented at all points as it ſhould be.——But not caring to banter his beaſt, he had hung all theſe up behind his ſtudy door;—and, in lieu of them, had ſeriouſly befitted him with juſt ſuch a bridle and ſuch a ſaddle, as the figure and value of ſuch a ſteed might well and truly deſerve.

In the ſeveral ſallies about his pariſh, and in the neighbouring viſits to the gentry who lived around him,———you will eaſily comprehend, that the parſon, ſo appointed, would both hear and ſee enough to keep his philoſophy from ruſting. To ſpeak the truth, he never could enter a village, but he caught the attention of both old and young——Labour ſtood ſtill as he paſs'd, the bucket hung ſuſpended in the middle of the well,———the ſpinning wheel forgot its round,—even chuck-farthing and ſhuffle-cap themſelves ſtood gaping till he had got out of ſight; and as his movement was not of the quickeſt, he had generally time enough upon his hands to make his obſervations,—

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to hear the groans of the ſerious,———and the laughter of the light-hearted;—all which he bore with excellent tranquillity.———His character was,——he loved a jeſt in his heart———and as he ſaw himſelf in the true point of ridicule, he would ſay, he could not be angry with others for ſeeing him in a light, in which he ſo ſtrongly ſaw himſelf: So that to his friends, who knew his foible was not the love of money, and who therefore made the leſs ſcruple in bantering the extravagance of his humour,—inſtead of giving the true cauſe,—he choſe rather to join in the laugh againſt himſelf, and as he never carried one ſingle ounce off fleſh upon his own bones, being altogether as ſpare a figure as his beaſt,—he would ſometimes inſiſt upon it, that the horſe was as good as the rider deſerved,—that they were, centaur-like,—both of a piece. At other times, and in other moods, when his ſpirits were above the temptation of falſe wit,—he would ſay, he found himſelf going off faſt in a conſumption; and with great gravity would pretend, he could not bear the ſight of a fat horſe without dejection of heart, and a ſenſible alteration in his pulſe; and that he had made choice of the lean one he rode upon, not only to keep himſelf in countenance, but in ſpirits.

At different times he would give fifty humorous and oppoſite reaſons for riding a meek-ſpirited jade of a broken-winded horſe, preferable to one of mettle—for on ſuch a one he could ſit mechanically; and meditate as delightfully *de vanitate mundi et fuga ſæculi*, as with the advantage of a death's head before him;—that, in all other exercitations, he could ſpend his time, as he rode ſlowly along—to as much account as in his ſtudy;—that he could draw up an argument in his ſermon,—or a hole in his breeches, as ſteadily on the one as in the other;———that briſk trotting and ſlow argumentation, like wit and judgment, were two incompatable movements.—But that, upon his ſteed—he could unite and reconcile every thing,—he could compoſe his ſermon,—he could compoſe his cough,—and, in caſe nature gave a call that way, he could likewiſe compoſe himſelf to ſleep.—In ſhort, the parſon upon ſuch encounters would aſſign any cauſe, but

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the true cauſe,—and he with-held the true one, only out of a nicety of temper, becauſe he thought it did honour to him.

But the truth of the ſtory was as follows: In the firſt years of this gentleman's life, and about the time when the ſuperb ſaddle and bridle were purchaſed by him, it had been his manner or vanity, or call it what you will,—to run into the oppoſite extream.—In the language of the country where he dwelt, he was ſaid to have loved a good horſe, and generally had one of the beſt in the whole pariſh ſtanding in his ſtable always ready for ſaddling; and as the neareſt midwife, as I told you, did not live nearer to the village than ſeven miles, and in a vile couutry,—it ſo fell out, that the poor gentleman was ſcarce a whole week together without ſome piteous application for his beaſt; and as he was not an unkind-hearted man, and every caſe was more preſſing and more diſtreſsful than the laſt,—as much as he loved his beaſt, he had never a heart to refuſe him; the upſhot of which was generally this, that his horſe was either clapp'd, or ſpavin'd, or graz'd —or he was twitter-bon'd, or broken winded, or ſomething, in ſhort, or other had befallen him which would let him carry no fleſh;—ſo that he had every nine or ten months a bad horſe to get rid of,—and a good horſe to purchaſe in his ſtead.

What the loſs in ſuch a ballance might amount to *communibus annis*, I will leave to a ſpecial jury of ſufferers in the ſame traffic to determine;—but let it be what it would, the honeſt gentleman bore it for many years without a murmur, till at length, by repeated ill accidents of the kind, he found it neceſſary to take the thing under conſideration; and upon weighing the whole, and ſumming it up in his mind, he found it not only diſproportion'd to his other expences, but with all ſo heavy an article in itſelf, as to diſable him from any other act of generoſity in his pariſh: Beſides this, he conſidered, that, with half the ſum thus galloped away, he could do ten times as much good; ——and what ſtill weighed more with him than all other conſiderations put together, was this, that it confined all his charity into one particular channel, and where,

where, as he fancied, it was the leaſt wanted, namely, to the child-bearing and child-getting part of his pariſh; reſerving nothing for the impotent,—nothing for the aged—nothing for the many comfortleſs ſcenes he was hourly called forth to viſit, where poverty, and ſickneſs, and affliction dwelt together.

For theſe reaſons he reſolved to diſcontinue the expence; and there appeared but two poſſible ways to extricate him clearly out of it;—and theſe were either to make it an irrevocable law never more to lend his ſteed upon any application whatever,—or elſe be content to ride the laſt poor devil, ſuch as they had made him, with all his aches and infirmities to the very end of the chapter.

As he dreaded his own conſtancy in the firſt,—he very chearfully betook himſelf to the ſecond; and tho' he could very well have explained it, as I ſaid, to his honour,—yet, for that very reaſon, he had a ſpirit above it; chooſing rather to bear the contempt of his enemies, and the laughter of his friends, than undergo the pain of telling a ſtory, which might ſeem a panegyric upon himſelf.

I have the higheſt idea of the ſpiritual and refined ſentiments of this reverend gentleman, from this ſingle ſtroke in his character, which I think comes up to any of the honeſt refinements of the peerleſs knight of *la Mancha*, whom, by the bye, with all his follies, I love more, and would actually have gone farther to have paid a viſit to, than the greateſt hero of antiquity.

But this is not the moral of my ſtory: The thing I had in view was to ſhew the temper of the world in the whole of this affair—For you muſt know, that ſo long as this explanation would have done the parſon credit—the devil a ſoul could find it out,—I ſuppoſe his enemies would not, and that his friends could not—But no ſooner did he beſtir himſelf in behalf of the midwife, and pay the expences of the ordinary's licenſe to ſet her up,—but the whole ſecret came out; every horſe he had loſt, and two horſes more than ever he had loſt, with all the circumſtances of their deſtruction, were known and diſtinctly remembered.—The ſtory ran like wild-fire.—

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" The parſon had a returning fit of pride which had " juſt ſeized him, and he was going to be well mount- " ed once again in his life; and if it was ſo, 'twas " plain as the ſun at noon day, he would pocket " the expence of the licenſe ten times told the very " firſt year:—ſo that every body was left to judge " what were his views in this act of charity."

What were his views in this, and in every other action of his life,—or rather what were the opinions which floated in the brains of other people concerning it, was a thought which too much floated in his own, and too often broke in upon his reſt, when he ſhould have been found aſleep.

About ten years ago this gentleman had the good fortune to be made entirely eaſy upon that ſcore,—it being juſt ſo long ſince he left his pariſh,———and the whole world at the ſame time behind him,——and ſtands accountable to a judge of whom he will have no cauſe to complain.

But there is a fatality attends the actions of ſome men: Order them as they will, they paſs through a certain medium which ſo twiſts and refracts them from their true directions———that, with all the titles to praiſe which a rectitude of heart can give, the doers of them are nevertheleſs forced to live and die without it.

Of the truth of which this gentleman was a painful example.———But to know by what means this came to paſs,——and to make that knowledge of uſe to you, I inſiſt upon it that you read the two following chapters, which contain ſuch a ſketch of his life and converſation, as will carry its moral along with it.——When this is done, if nothing ſtops us in our way, we will go on with the midwife.

CHAP. XI.

YORICK was this parſon's name, and, what is very remarkable in it, (as appears from a moſt antient account of the family wrote upon ſtrong vellum, and now in perfect preſervation) it had been exactly ſo ſpelt for near,———I was within an ace of ſaying

ſaying nine hundred years;———but I would not ſhake my credit in telling an improbable truth, however indiſputable in itſelf;——and therefore I ſhall content myſelf with only ſaying,———it had been exactly ſo ſpelt, without the leaſt variation or tranſpoſition of a ſingle letter, for I do not know how long; which is more than I would venture to ſay of one half of the beſt ſurnames in the kingdom; which, in a courſe of years, have generally undergone as many chops and changes as their owners.—Has this been owing to the pride, or to the ſhame of their reſpective proprietors?—In honeſt truth, I think ſometimes to the one and ſometimes to the other, juſt as the temptation has wrought. But a villainous affair it is, and will one day ſo blend and confound us all together, that no one ſhall be able to ſtand up and ſwear, "that his own great grand father was the "man who did either this or that."

This evil had been ſufficiently fenced againſt by the prudent care of the *Yorick* family, and their religious preſervation of theſe records I quote, which do further inform us, that the family was originally of *Daniſh* extraction, and had been tranſplanted into *England* as early as in the reign of *Horwendillus*, king of *Denmark*, in whoſe court it ſeems, an anceſtor of this Mr. *Yorick's*, and from whom he was lineally deſcended, held a conſiderable poſt to the day of his death. Of what nature this conſiderable poſt was, this record ſaith not,—it only adds, That for near two centuries, it had been totally aboliſhed as altogether unneceſſary, not only in that court, but in every other court in the Chriſtian world.

It has often come into my head, that this poſt could be no other than that of the king's chief Jeſter; —and that *Hamlet's Yorick* in our *Shakeſpear*, many of whoſe plays, you know, are founded upon authenticated facts,—was certainly the very man.

I have not the time to look into *Saxo-Grammaticus's Daniſh* hiſtory, to know the certainty of this; —but if you have leiſure, and can eaſily get at the book, you may do it full as well yourſelf.

I had juſt time in my travels through *Denmark* with Mr.

Mr. *Noddy*'s eldeſt ſon, whom in the year 1741 I accompanied as governor, riding along with him at a prodigious rate thro' moſt parts of *Europe*, and of which original journey perform'd by us two, a moſt delectable narrative will be given in the progreſs of this work. I had juſt time, I ſay, and that was all, to prove the truth of an obſervation made by a long ſojourner in that country;—namely, "That nature was neither very laviſh, nor was ſhe very ſtingy in her gifts of genius and capacity to its inhabitants;—but, like a diſcreet parent, was moderately kind to them all; obſerving ſuch an equal tenor in the diſtribution of her favours, as to bring them, in thoſe points, pretty near to a level with each other; ſo that you will meet with few inſtances in that kingdom of refin'd parts; but a great deal of good plain houſhold underſtanding amongſt all ranks of people, of which every body has a ſhare;" which is, I think, very right.

With us, you ſee, the caſe is quite different;—we are all ups and downs in this matter;—you are a great genius;—or 'tis fifty to one, Sir, you are a great dunce and a blockhead;—not that there is a total want of intermediate ſteps,—no,—we are not ſo irregular as that comes to;—but the two extremes are more common, and in a greater degree in this unſettled iſland, where nature in her gifts and diſpoſitions of this kind, is moſt whimſical and capricious; fortune herſelf not being more ſo in the bequeſt of her goods and chattels than ſhe.

This is all that ever ſtagger'd my faith in regard to *Yorick*'s extraction, who by what I can remember of him, and by all the accounts I could ever get of him, ſeem'd not to have had one ſingle drop of *Daniſh* blood in his whole craſis; in nine hundred years it might poſſibly have all run out:—I will not philoſophize one moment with you about it; for happen how it would, the fact was this:—That inſtead of that cold phlegm and exact regularity of ſenſe and humours, you would have look'd for, in one ſo extracted;—he was, on the contrary, as mercurial and ſublimated a compoſition,—as heteroclite a creature in all his declenſions

cleſions——with as much life, and whim, and *gaite de cæur* about him, as the kindlieſt climate could have engendered and put together. With all this ſail, poor *Yorick* carried not one ounce of ballaſt; he was utterly unpractiſed in the world; and at the age of twenty-ſix, knew juſt about as well how to ſteer his courſe in it, as a romping unſuſpicious girl of thirteen: So that upon his firſt ſetting out, the briſk gale of his ſpirits, as you will imagine, ran him foul ten times a day of ſome body's tackling; and as the grave and more ſlow-paced were oftenеſt in his way;—you may likewiſe imagine, 'twas with ſuch he generally had the ill luck to get the moſt entangled. For aught I know there might be ſome mixture of unlucky wit at the bottom of ſuch *Fracas*—For, to ſpeak the truth, *Yorick* had an invincible diſlike and oppoſition in his nature to gravity;—not to gravity as ſuch—for where gravity was wanted, he would be the moſt grave and ſerious of mortal men for days and weeks together;—but he was an enemy to the affectation of it, and declared open war againſt it, only as it appeared a cloak for ignorance, or for folly; and then, whenever it fell in his way, however ſheltered and protected, he ſeldom gave it much quarter.

Sometimes, in his wild way of talking, he would ſay, that gravity was an errant ſcoundrel; and he would add,—of the moſt dangerous kind too,——becauſe a ſly one; and that he verily believed, more honeſt well-meaning people were bubbled out of their goods and money by it in one twelve-month, than by pocket-picking and ſhop-lifting in ſeven. In the naked temper which a merry heart diſcovered, he would ſay, there was no danger—but to itſelf: whereas the very eſſence of gravity was deſign, and conſequently deceit;—— 'twas a taught trick, to gain credit of the world for more ſenſe and knowledge than a man was worth; and that with all its pretenſions,—it was no better, but often worſe, than what a *French* wit had long ago defined it, *viz.* A *myſterious carriage of the body to cover the defects of the mind*;—which definition of gravity, *Yorick*, with great imprudence, would ſay, deſerved to be wrote in letters of gold.

But, in plain truth, he was a man unhackneyed and unpractiſed in the world, and was altogether as indiſcreet and fooliſh on every other ſubject of diſcourſe, where policy is wont to impreſs reſtraint. *Yorick* had no impreſſion but one, and that was what aroſe from the nature of the deed ſpoken of; which impreſſion he would uſually tranſlate into plain *Engliſh* without any periphraſis,——and too oft without much diſtinction of either perſonage, time, or place;—ſo that when mention was made of a pitiful or an ungenerous proceeding,—he never gave himſelf a moment's time to reflect who was the Hero of the piece———what his ſtation———or how far he had power to hurt him hereafter;——but if it was a dirty action,—without much ado,——The man was a dirty fellow—and ſo on:—And as his comments had uſually the ill fate to be terminated either in a *bon mot*, or to be enlivened throughout with ſome drollery or humour of expreſſion, it gave wings to *Yorick*'s indiſcretion. In a word, though he never ſought, yet at the ſame time, as he ſeldom ſhunned occaſions of ſaying what came uppermoſt, and without much ceremony,———he had but too many temptations in life, of ſcattering his wit and his humour,—his gibes and his jeſts about him.—— They were not loſt for want of gathering.

What were the conſequence, and what was *Yorick*'s cataſtrophe thereupon, you will read in the next chapter.

CHAP XII.

THE *Mortgager* and the *Mortagee* differ the one from the other, not more in length of purſe, than the *Jeſter* and *Jeſtee* do in that of memory. But in this the compariſon between them runs, as the ſcholiaſts call it, upon all four; which, by the bye, is upon one or two legs more, than ſome of the beſt of *Homer*'s can pretend to;—namely, That the one raiſes a ſum and the other a laugh at your expence, and think no more about it. Intereſt, however ſtill runs on in both caſes;—the periodical or accidental payments of it, juſt ſerving to keep the memory of the affair alive; till

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at length, in ſome evil hour—pop comes the creditor upon each, and by demanding principal upon the ſpot, together with full intereſt to the very day, makes them both feel the full extent of their obligations.

As the reader (for I hate your *ifs*) has a thorough knowledge of human nature, I need not ſay more to ſatisfy him, that my Hero could not go on at this rate, without ſome ſlight experience of theſe incidental memento's. To ſpeak the truth, he had wantonly involved himſelf in a multitude of ſmall book-debts of this ſtamp, which, notwithſtanding *Eugenius*'s frequent advice he too much diſregarded; thinking that as not one of them was contracted thro' any malignancy;—but, on the contrary, from an honeſty of mind, and a mere jocundity of humour, they would all of them be croſſed out in courſe.

Eugenius would never admit this, and would often tell him, that one day or other he would certainly be reckoned with; and he would often add in accent of ſorrowful apprehenſion—to the uttermoſt mite. To which *Yorick*, with his uſual careleſſneſs of heart, would as often anſwer with a pſhaw!——and if the ſubject was ſtarted in the fields——with a hop, ſkip, and a jump, at the end of it; but if cloſe pent up in the ſocial chimney corner, where the culprit was barricado'd in, with a table and a couple of arm chairs, and could not ſo readily fly off in a tangent,——*Eugenius* would then go on with his lecture upon diſcretion, in words to this purpoſe, though ſomewhat better put together.

Truſt me, dear *Yorick*, this unwary pleaſantry of thine will ſooner or later bring thee into ſcrapes and difficulties, which no after-wit can extricate thee out of.—In theſe ſallies, too oft, I ſee it happens, that a perſon laughed at, conſiders himſelf in the light of a perſon injured, with all the rights of ſuch a ſituation belonging to him; and when thou vieweſt him in that light too, and reckoneſt up his friends, his family, his kindred, and allies,—and muſtereſt up with them the many recruits which will liſt under him from a ſenſe of common danger;—'tis no extravagant arithmetic to ſay, that for every ten jokes,—thou haſt got an hun-

dred enemies; and till thou haſt gone on, and raiſed a ſwarm of waſps about thy ears, and art half ſtung to death by them, thou wilt never be convinced it is ſo.

I cannot ſuſpect it in the man whom I eſteem, that there is the leaſt ſpur from ſpleen or malevolence of intent in theſe ſallies,——I believe and know them to be truly honeſt and ſportive:—but conſider, my dear lad, that fools cannot diſtinguiſh this, and that knaves will not; and thou knoweſt not what it is, either to provoke the one, or to make merry with the other,—whenever they aſſociate for mutual defence, depend upon it, they will carry on the war in ſuch a manner againſt thee, my dear friend, as to make thee heartily ſick of it, and of thy life too.

REVENGE from ſome baneful corner ſhall level a tale of diſhonour at thee, which no innocence of heart or integrity of conduct ſhall ſet right.——The fortunes of thy houſe ſhall totter,—thy character, which led the way to them, ſhall bleed on every ſide of it,—thy faith queſtioned,—thy works belied,——thy wit forgotten,—thy learning trampled on. To wind up the laſt ſcene of thy tragedy, CRUELTY and COWARDICE, twin ruffians, hired and ſet on by MALICE in the dark, ſhall ſtrike together at all thy infirmities and miſtakes:—the beſt of us, my dear lad, lie open there,—and truſt me,—truſt me, *Yorick, When to gratify a private appetite, it is once reſolved upon, that an innocent and an helpleſs creature ſhall be ſacrificed, 'tis an eaſy matter to pick up ſticks enow from any thicket where it has ſtrayed, to make a fire to offer it up with.*

Yorick ſcarce ever heard this ſad vaticination of his deſtiny read over to him, but with a tear ſtealing from his eye, and a promiſſory look attending it, that he was reſolved, for the time to come, to ride his tit with more ſobriety.——But, alas, too late!—a grand confederacy, with ***** and ***** at the head of it, was formed before the prediction of it.—The whole plan of the attack, juſt as *Eugenius* had foreboded, was put in execution all at once,—with ſo little mercy on the ſide of the allies,—and ſo little ſuſpicion in *Yorick*, of what was carrying on againſt him,—that when he thought, good eaſy man! full ſurely

pre-

preferment was o' ripening,—they had ſmote his root, and then he fell, as many a worthy man had fallen before him.

Yorick, however, fought it out with all imaginable gallantry for ſome time; till, over-powered by numbers, and worn out at length by the calamities of the war,——but more ſo, by the ungenerous manner in which it was carried on,—he threw down the ſword; and though he kept up his ſpirits in appearance to the laſt,—he died, nevertheleſs, as was generally thought, quite broken hearted.

What inclined *Eugenius* to the ſame opinion was as follows:

A few hours before *Yorick* breathed his laſt, *Eugenius* ſtept in with an intent to take his laſt ſight and laſt farewell of him: Upon his drawing *Yorick*'s curtain, and aſking how he felt himſelf, *Yorick*, looking up in his face, took hold of his hand ——————and after thanking him for the many tokens of his friendſhip to him, for which, he ſaid, if it was their fate to meet hereafter,——he would thank him again and again.—He told him he was within a few hours of giving his enemies the ſlip for ever.—I hope not, anſwered *Eugenius*, with tears trickling down his cheeks, and with the tendereſt tone that ever man ſpoke,—I hope not, *Yorick*, ſaid he.—*Yorick* replied, with a look up, and a gentle ſqueeze of *Eugenius*'s hand, and that was all,—but it cut *Eugenius* to his heart.——Come,—come, *Yorick*, quoth *Eugenius*, wiping his eyes, and ſummoning up the man within him,—my dear lad, be comforted,—let not all thy ſpirits and fortitude forſake thee at this criſis, when thou moſt wanteſt them;——who knows what reſources are in ſtore, and what the power of God may yet do for thee?————*Yorick* laid his hand upon his heart, and gently ſhook his head;——for my part, continued *Eugenius*, crying bitterly as he uttered the words,—I declare I know not, *Yorick*, how to part with thee,————and would gladly flatter my hopes, added *Eugenius*, cheering up his voice, that there is ſtill enough left of thee to make a biſhop,—and that I may live to ſee it.—I beſeech thee, *Eugenius*, quoth *Yorick*, taking off his night-cap

as well as he could with his left hand,—his right being ſtill graſped cloſe in that of *Eugenius*,—I beſeech thee to take a view of my head.—I ſee nothing that ails it, replied *Eugenius*. Then, alas! my friend, ſaid *Yorick*, let me tell you, that 'tis ſo bruiſed and miſſhapened with the blows which ***** and *****, and ſome others have ſo unhandſomely given me in the dark, that I might ſay with *Sancho Pancha*, that ſhould I recover, and "Mitres thereupon be ſuffered to rain "down from heaven as thick as hail, not one of 'em "would fit it."—*Yorick*'s laſt breath was hanging upon his trembling lips, ready to depart, as he uttered this,—yet ſtill it was uttered with ſomething of a *cervantick* tone;—and as he ſpoke it, *Eugenius* could perceive a ſtream of lambent fire lighted up for a moment in his eyes;—faint picture of thoſe flaſhes of his ſpirit, which (as *Shakeſpear* ſaid of his anceſtor) were wont to ſet the table in a roar!

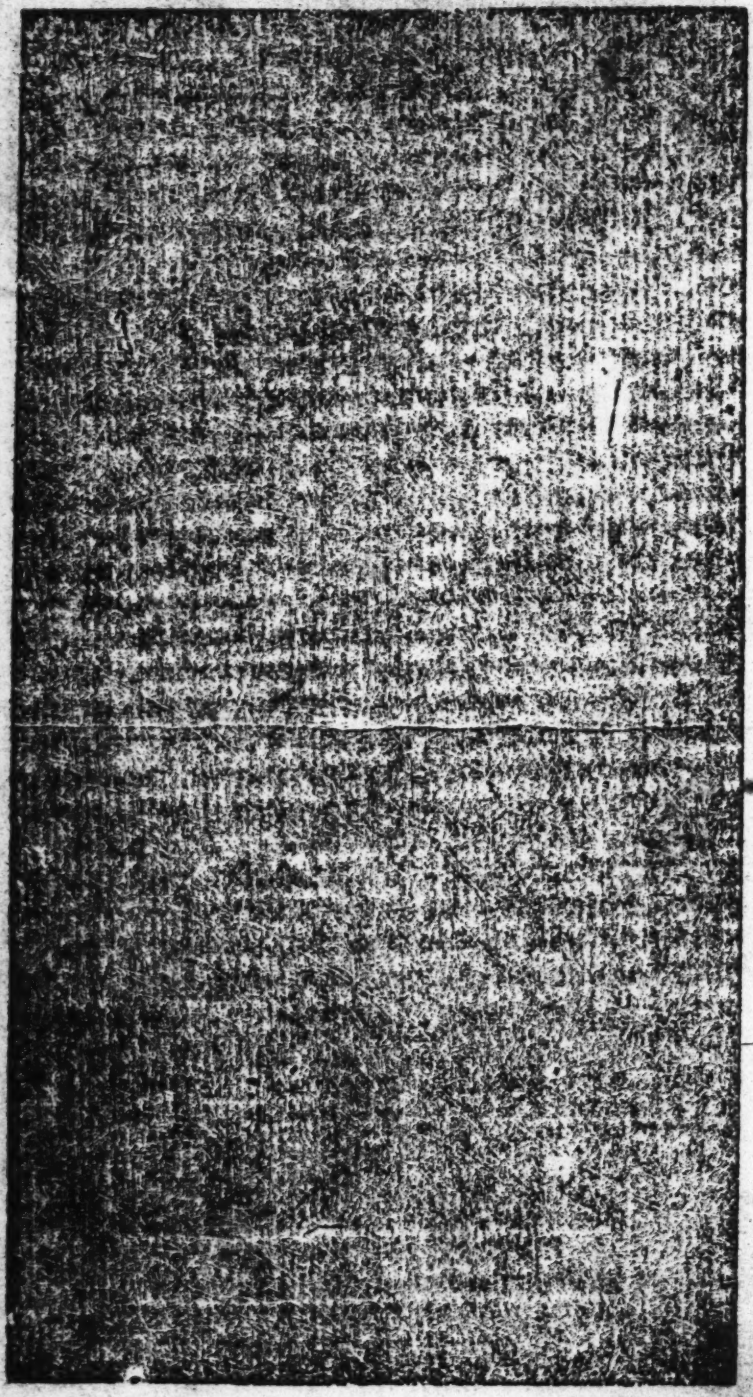
Eugenius was convinced from this, that the heart of his friend was broke; he ſqueezed his hand,———— and then walked ſoftly out of the room, weeping as he walked. *Yorick* followed *Eugenius* with his eyes to the door,—he then cloſed them,—and never opened them more.

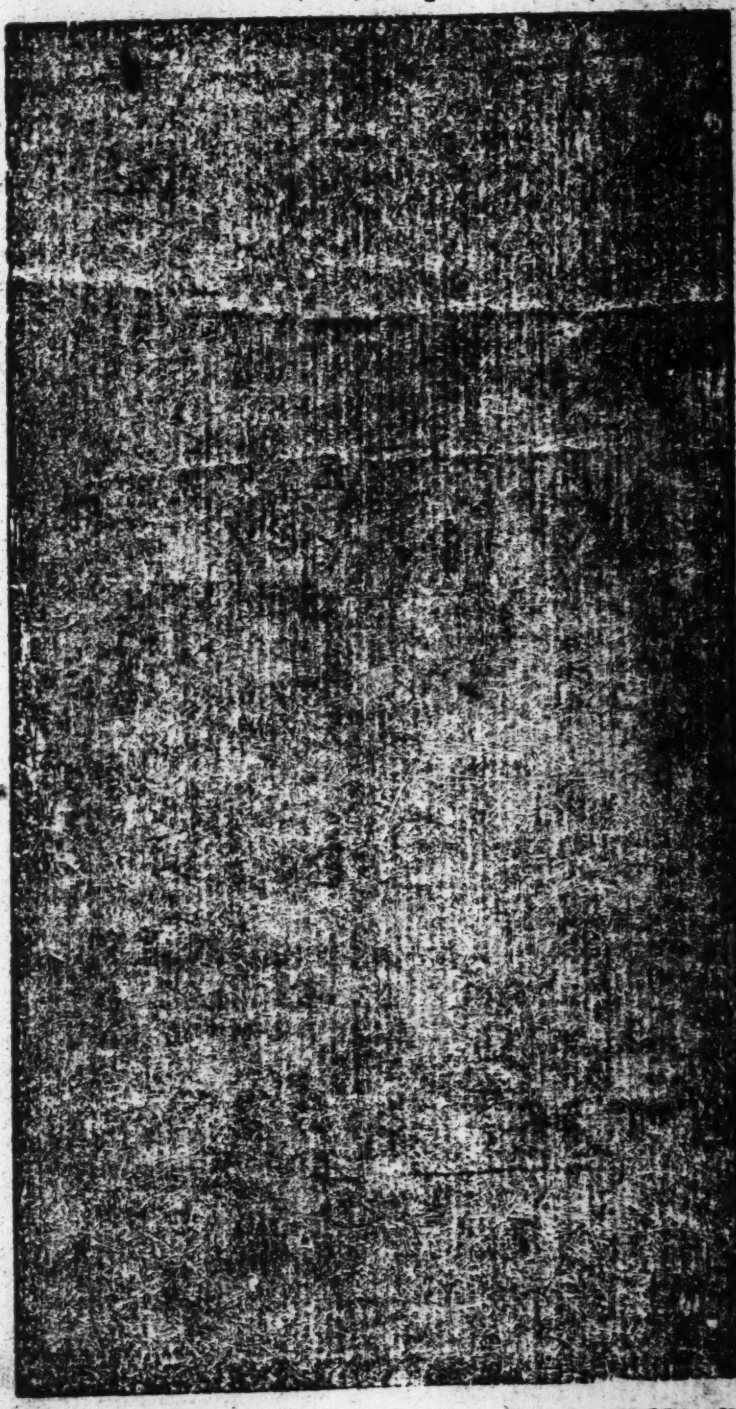
He lies buried in a corner of his church-yard, in the pariſh of ————, under a plain marble ſlabb, which his friend *Eugenius*, by leave of his executors, laid upon his grave, with no more than theſe three words of inſcription, ſerving both for his epitaph and elegy.

Alas, poor YORICK!

Ten times in a day has *Yorick's* ghoſt the conſolation to hear his monumental inſcription read over, with ſuch a variety of plaintive tones, as denote a general pity and eſteem for him;——a foot-way croſſing the church-yard cloſe by the ſide of his grave,——not a paſſenger goes by without ſtopping to caſt a look upon it,——and ſighing as he walks on,

Alas, poor YORICK!





CHAP. XIII.

IT is ſo long ſince the reader of this rhapſodical work has been parted from the midwife, that it is high time to mention her again to him, merely to put him in mind that there is ſuch a body ſtill in the world, and whom, upon the beſt judgment I can form upon my own plan at preſent,—I am going to introduce to him for good and all: But as freſh matter may be ſtarted, and much unexpected buſineſs fall out betwixt the reader and myſelf which may require immediate diſpatch;———'twas right to take care that the poor woman ſhould not be loſt in the mean time;———— becauſe when ſhe is wanted we can no way do without her.

I think I told you that this good woman was a perſon of no ſmall note and conſequence throughout our whole village and townſhip;—that her fame had ſpread itſelf to the very out-edge and circumference of that circle of importance, of which kind every ſoul living, whether he has a ſhirt to his back or no,—has one ſurrounding him;—which ſaid circle, by the way, whenever 'tis ſaid that ſuch a one is of great weight and importance in the *world*,———I deſire may be enlarged or contracted in your worſhip's fancy, in a compound ratio of the ſtation, profeſſion, knowledge, abilities, heighth, and depth (meaſuring both ways) of the perſonage brought before you.

In the preſent caſe, if I remember, I fixed it at about four or five miles, which not only comprehended the whole parish, but extended itſelf to two or three of the adjacent hamlets in the ſkirts of the next pariſh; which made a conſiderable thing of it. I muſt add, that ſhe was, moreover, very well looked on at one large grange-houſe, and ſome other old houſes and farms within two or three miles, as I ſaid, from the ſmoke of her own chimney:———But I muſt here, once for all, inform you, that all this will be more exactly delineated and explained in a map now in the hands of the engraver, which, with many other pieces and developments

lopments to this work, will be added to the end of the twentieth volume,—not to ſwell the work,—I deteſt the thought of ſuch a thing;————but by way of commentary, ſcholium, illuſtration, and key to ſuch paſſages, incidents, or innuendos as ſhall be thought to be either of private interpretation, or of dark or doubtful meaning, after my life and my opinions ſhall have been read over, (now don't forget the meaning of the word) by all the *world*;—which betwixt you and me, and in ſpight of all the gentlemen reviewers in *Great-Britain*, and of all that their worſhips ſhall undertake to write or ſay to the contrary,——I am determined ſhall be the caſe.————I need not tell your worſhip, that all this is ſpoke in confidence.

CHAP. XIV.

UPON looking into my mother's marriage ſettlement, in order to ſatisfy myſelf and reader in a point neceſſary to be cleared up, before we could proceed any farther in this hiſtory;——I had the good fortune to pop upon the very thing I wanted, before I had read a day and a half ſtraight forwards,—it might have taken me up a month————which ſhews plainly, that when a man ſits down to write a hiſtory——though it be but the hiſtory of *Jack Hickathrift* or *Tom Thumb*, he knows no more than his heels what lets and confounded hinderances he is to meet with in his way,—or what a dance he may be led, by one excurſion or another, before all is over. Could an hiſtoriographer drive on his hiſtory, as a muleteer drives on his mule————ſtraight forward,—— for inſtance, from *Rome* all the way to *Loretto*, without ever once turning his head aſide, either to the right hand or to the left,——he might venture to foretell you to an hour when he ſhould get to his journey's end;———— but the thing is, morally ſpeaking, impoſſible: for if he is a man of the leaſt ſpirit, he will have fifty deviations from a ſtraight line to make with this or that party as he goes along, which he can no ways avoid. He will have views and proſpects to himſelf perpetually ſoliciting his eye, which he can no more

more help ſtanding ſtill to look at than he can fly! he will more over have various

Accounts to reconcile:
Anecdotes to pick up:
Inſcriptions to make out:
Stories to weave in:
Traditions to ſift:
Perſonages to call upon:
Panegyricks to paſte up at this door:
Paſquinades at that:———All which both the man and the mule are quite exempt from. To ſum up all; there are archives at every ſtage to be looked into, and rolls, records, documents, and endleſs genealogies, which juſtice ever and anon calls him back to ſtay the reading of:—In ſhort, there is no end of it;———for my own part, I declare I have been at it theſe ſix weeks, making all the ſpeed I poſſibly could,———and am not yet born:—I have juſt been able, and that's all, to tell you *when* it happened, but not *how*;—ſo that you ſee the thing is yet far from being accompliſhed.

Theſe unforeſeen ſtoppages, which I own I had no conception of when I firſt ſet out;———but which, I am convinced now, will rather increaſe than diminiſh as I advance,——have ſtruck out a hint which I am reſolved to follow;—and that is,—not to be in a hurry;———but to go on leiſurely, writing and publiſhing two volumes of my life every year,——— which if I am ſuffered to go on quietly, and can make a tolerable bargain with my bookſeller, I ſhall continue to do as long as I live.

CHAP. XV.

THE article in my mother's marriage-ſettlement, which I told the reader I was at the pains to ſearch for, and which now that I have found it, I think proper to lay before him,—is ſo much more fully expreſſed in the deed itſelf, than ever I can pretend to do it, that it would be barbarity to take it out of the lawyer's hands:——It is as follows.

" *And this Indenture further witneſſeth*, That the ſaid

" *Walter*

" *Walter Shandy*, merchant, in conſideration of the ſaid " intended marriage to be had, and by God's bleſſing " to be well and truly ſolemnized and conſummated, " between the ſaid *Walter Shandy* and *Elizabeth Mo-* " *lineux*, aforeſaid, and divers other good and valua- " ble cauſes and conſiderations him thereunto ſpecial- " ly moving—doth grant, covenant, condeſcend, con- " ſent, conclude, bargain, and fully agree to and with " *John Dixon* and *James Turner*, Eſqrs. the above- " named truſtees, *&c. &c.*——*to wit*,——that in " caſe it ſhould hereafter ſo fall out, chance, hap- " pen, or otherwiſe come to paſs,——that the " ſaid *Walter Shandy*, merchant, ſhall have left off " buſineſs, before the times or time that the ſaid *Eli-* " *zabeth Molineux* ſhall, according to the courſe of na- " ture, or otherwiſe, have left off bearing and bring- " ing forth children;—and that, in conſequence of " the ſaid *Walter Shandy* having ſo left off buſineſs, " ſhall, in deſpight, and againſt the free will, conſent, " and good-liking of the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux*,—— " make a departure from the city of *London*, in order " to retire to, and dwell upon, his ſaid eſtate at *Shandy-* " *Hall*, in the county of—, or at any other country- " ſeat; caſtle, hall, manſion-houſe, meſſuage, or grange- " houſe, now purchaſed or hereafter to be purchaſed, " or upon any part or parcel thereof:—That then, " and as often as the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux* ſhall " happen to be enceint with child or children ſeverally " and lawfully begot, or to be begotten, upon the " body of the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux* during her ſaid " coverture,—he the ſaid *Walter Shandy* ſhall, at his " own proper coſt and charges, and out of his own " proper monies, upon good and reaſonable notice, " which is hereby agreed to be within ſix weeks of her " the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux*'s full reckoning, or time " of ſuppoſed and computed delivery,—pay, or cauſe " to be paid, the ſum of one hundred and twenty " pounds of good and lawful money, to *John Dixon* " and *James Turner*, Eſqrs. or aſſigns,—upon TRUST " and confidence, and for and unto the uſe and uſes, " intent, end, and purpoſes following:——*That*

" *is*

" *is to ſay*,—That the ſaid ſum of one hundred and " twenty pounds ſhall be paid into the hands of the " ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux*, or to be otherwiſe applied " by them the ſaid truſtees, for the well and truly " hiring of one coach, with able and ſufficient horſes, " to carry and convey the body of the ſaid *Elizabeth* " *Molineux* and the child or children which ſhe ſhall " be then and there enceint and pregnant with,——— " unto the city of *London*; and for the further paying " and defraying of all other incidental coſts, charges, " and expences whatſoever,———in and about, and " for, and relating to her ſaid intended delivery and " lying-in, in the ſaid city or ſuburbs thereof. And " that the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux* ſhall and may from " time to time, and at all ſuch time and times as are " here covenanted and agreed upon,———peace- " ably and quietly hire the ſaid coach and horſes, and " have free ingreſs, egreſs, and regreſs throughout her " journey, in and from the ſaid coach, according to " the tenor, true intent, and meaning of theſe pre- " ſents, without any let, ſuit, trouble, diſturbance, mo- " leſtation, diſcharge, hinderance, forfeiture, eviction, " vexation, interruption, or encumbrance whatſoever. " ———And that it ſhall moreover be lawful to " and for the ſaid *Elizabeth Molineux*, from time to " time, and as oft or often as ſhe ſhall well and truly " be advanced in her ſaid pregnancy, to the time " heretofore ſtipulated and agreed upon,———to " live and reſide in ſuch place or places, and in ſuch " family or families, and with ſuch relations, friends, " and other perſons within the ſaid city of *London*, as " ſhe at her own will and pleaſure, notwithſtanding " her preſent coverture, and as if ſhe was a *feme ſole* " and unmarried,—ſhall think fit.—*And this Indenture* " *further witneſſeth*, That for the more effectually " carrying of the ſaid covenant into execution, the " ſaid *Walter Shandy*, merchant, doth hereby grant, " bargain, ſell, releaſe, and confirm unto the ſaid *John* " *Dixon* and *James Turner*, Eſqrs. their heirs, execu- " tors, and aſſigns, in their actual poſſeſſion now be- " ing, by virtue of an indenture of bargain and ſale for " a year to them the ſaid *John Dixon* and *James Tur-*

" *ner*,

" *ner*, Eſqrs. by him the ſaid *Walter Shandy*, merchant,
" thereof made; which ſaid bargain and ſale for a
" year, bears date the day next before the date of
" theſe preſents, and by force and virtue of the
" ſtatute for transferring of uſes into poſſeſſion——
" *All* that the manor and lordſhip of *Shandy* in the
" county of———, with all the rights, members,
" and appurtenances thereof; and all and every the
" meſſuages, houſes, buildings, barns, ſtables, orchards,
" gardens, backſides, toſts, croſts, garths, cottages,
" lands, meadows, feedings, paſtures, marſhes, com-
" mons, woods, underwoods, drains, fiſheries, waters,
" and water-courſes,——— together with all rents,
" reverſions, ſervices, annuities, fee-farms, knights
" fees, views of frank-pledge, eſcheats, reliefs, mines,
" quarries, goods and chattels of felons and fugitives,
" felons of themſelves, and put in exigent, deodands,
" free warrens, and all other royalties and ſeigno-
" ries, rights and juriſdictions, privileges and here-
" ditaments whatſoever.——*And alſo* the advowſon,
" donation, preſentation, and free diſpoſition of the
" rectory or parſonage of *Shandy* aforeſaid, and all
" and every the tenths, tythes, glebe-lands"———
In three words———My mother was to lie in (if ſhe choſe it) in *London*.

But in order to put a ſtop to the practice of any unfair play on the part of my mother, which a marriage article of this nature too manifeſtly opened a door to, and which indeed had never been thought of at all, but for my uncle *Toby Shandy*;—a clauſe was added in ſecurity of my father, which was this:——
" That in caſe my mother hereafter ſhould at any
" time, put my father to the trouble and expence of a
" *London* journey upon falſe cries and tokens,—that
" for every ſuch inſtance ſhe ſhould forfeit all the
" right and title which the covenant gave her to the
" next turn;—but to no more,—and ſo on, *toties*
" *quoties*, in as effectual a manner, as if ſuch a covenant
" betwixt them had not been made."—This, by the way, was no more than what was reaſonable;——and yet, as reaſonable as it was, I have ever thought it hard,

hard, that the whole weight of the article ſhould have fallen entirely, as it did, upon myſelf.

But I was begot and born to misfortunes;——for my poor mother, whether it was wind or water,—or a compound of both,——or neither;—or whether it was ſimply the mere ſwell of imagination and fancy in her;—or how far a ſtrong wiſh and deſire to have it ſo, might miſlead her judgment; in ſhort, whether ſhe was deceived or deceiving in this matter, it no way becomes me to decide. The fact was this, that in the latter end of *September*, 1717, which was the year before I was born, my mother having carried my father up to town much againſt the grain,—he peremptorily inſiſted upon the clauſe;—ſo that I was doomed, by marriage articles, to have my noſe ſqueezed as flat to my face, as if the deſtinies had actually ſpun me without one.

How this event came about,—and what a train of vexatious diſappointments, in one ſtage or other of my life, have purſued me from the mere loſs, or rather compreſſion of this one ſingle member,—ſhall be laid before the reader all in due time.

CHAP. XVI.

MY father, as any body may naturally imagine, came down with my mother into the country, in but a pettiſh kind of a humour. The firſt twenty or five and twenty miles he did nothing in the world but fret and teaſe himſelf, and indeed my mother too, about the curſed expence, which he ſaid might every ſhilling of it have been ſaved;——then what vexed him more than every thing elſe was the provoking time of the year,—which, as I told you, was towards the end of *September*, when his wall-fruit, and green gages eſpecially, in which he was very curious, were juſt ready for pulling:——"Had he been whiſtled "up to *London*, upon a *Tom Fool*'s errand in any other "month of the whole year, he ſhould not have ſaid "three words about it."

For the next two whole ſtages, no ſubject would go down, but the heavy blow he had ſuſtained from the loſs

loſs of a ſon, whom, it ſeems, he had fully reckoned upon in his mind, and regiſtered down in his pocket-book, as a ſecond ſtaff for his old age, in caſe *Bobby* ſhould fail him. "The diſappointment of this, he ſaid, "was ten times more to a wiſe man than all the money "which the journey, *&c.* had coſt him, put together "—rot the hundred and twenty pounds,——he did "not mind it a ruſh."

From *Stilton* all the way to *Grantham*, nothing in the whole affair provoked him ſo much as the condolences of his friends, and the fooliſh figure they ſhould both make at church the firſt *Sunday*;——of which, in the ſatirical vehemence of his wit, now ſharpened a little by vexation, he would give ſo many humorous and provoking deſcriptions,——and place his rib and ſelf in ſo many tormenting lights and attitudes in the face of the whole congregation;——that my mother declared theſe two ſtages were ſo truly tragi-comical, that ſhe did nothing but laugh and cry in a breath, from one end to the other of them all the way.

From *Grantham*, till they had croſſed the *Trent*, my father was out of all kind of patience, at the vile trick and impoſition which he fancied my mother had put upon him in this affair——"Certainly," he would ſay to himſelf, over and over again, "The woman "could not be deceived herſelf;———if ſhe could, "——— what weakneſs!"———tormenting word! which led his imagination a thorny dance, and, before all was over, played the deuce and all with him;——for ſure as ever the word *weakneſs* was uttered and ſtruck full upon his brain,—ſo ſure it ſet him upon running diviſions upon how many kinds of weakneſſes there were;—that there was ſuch a thing as weakneſs of the body,———as well as weakneſs of the mind,—and then he would do nothing but ſyllogize within himſelf for a ſtage or two together, how far the cauſe of all theſe vexations might, or might not, have ariſen out of himſelf.

In ſhort, he had ſo many little ſubjects of diſquietude ſpringing out of this one affair, all fretting ſucceſſively in his mind as they roſe up in it, that my mother, whatever was her journey up, had but an uneaſy

uneaſy journey of it down———In a word, as ſhe complained to my uncle *Toby*, he would have tired out the patience of any fleſh alive.

CHAP. XVII.

THOUGH my father travelled homewards, as I told you, in none of the beſt of moods—pſhawing and piſh-ing all the way down,—yet he had the complaiſance to keep the worſt part of the ſtory ſtill to himſelf;—which was the reſolution he had taken of doing himſelf the juſtice, which my uncle *Toby*'s clauſe in the marriage ſettlement empowered him; nor was it till the very night in which I was begot, which was thirteen months after, that ſhe had the leaſt intimation of his deſign;———when my father, happening, as you remember, to be a little chagrined and out of temper,———took occaſion, as they lay chatting gravely in bed afterwards, talking over what was to come,———to let her know that ſhe muſt accommodate herſelf as well as ſhe could to the bargain made between them in their marriage deeds; which was to lye in of her next child in the country; to balance the laſt year's journey.

My father was a gentleman of many virtues,——— but he had a ſtrong ſpice of that in his temper which might, or might not, add to the number.——'Tis known by the name of perſeverance in a good cauſe, ———and of obſtinacy in a bad one: Of this my mother had ſo much knowledge, that ſhe knew 'twas to no purpoſe to make any remonſtrance,—ſo ſhe e'en reſolved to ſit down quietly, and make the moſt of it.

CHAP. XVIII.

AS the point was that night agreed, or rather determined, that my mother ſhould lye in of me in the country, ſhe took her meaſures accordingly; for which purpoſe, when ſhe was three days or thereabouts gone with child, ſhe began to caſt her eyes upon the midwife, whom you have ſo often heard me mention; and before the week was well got round, as the famous

Dr.

Dr. *Manningham* was not to be had, ſhe had come to a final determination in her mind,——notwithſtanding there was a ſcientifick operator within ſo near a call as eight miles of us, and who, moreover, had expreſly wrote a five ſhillings book upon the ſubject of midwifery, in which he had expoſed, not only the blunders of the fiſterhood itſelf,—but had likewiſe ſuperadded many curious improvements for the quicker extraction of the fœtus in croſs births, and ſome other caſes of danger which delay us in getting into the world; notwithſtanding all this, my mother, I ſay, was abſolutely determined to truſt her life and mine with it, into no ſoul's hand but this old woman's only.—Now this I like;—when we cannot get at the very thing we wiſh,———never to take up with the next beſt in degree to it;———no, that's pitiful beyond deſcription;——it is no more than a week from this very day, in which I am now writing this book for the edification of the world,——— which is *March* 9, 1759,——— that my dear, dear *Jenny*, obſerving I looked a little grave, as ſhe ſtood cheapening a ſilk of five and twenty ſhillings a yard,—told the mercer ſhe was ſorry ſhe had given him ſo much trouble;——and immediately went and bought herſelf a yard-wide ſtuff of tenpence a yard. 'Tis the duplication of one and the ſame greatneſs of ſoul; only what leſſened the honour of it ſomewhat, in my mother's caſe, was, that ſhe could not heroine it in ſo violent and hazardous an extream, as one in her ſituation might have wiſhed, becauſe the old midwife had really ſome little claim to be depended upon,————as much, at leaſt, as ſucceſs could give her; having, in the courſe of her practice of near twenty years in the pariſh, brought every mother's ſon of them into the world, without any one ſlip or accident, which could fairly be laid to her account.

Theſe facts, tho' they had their weight, yet did not altogether ſatisfy ſome few ſcruples and uneaſineſſes, which hung upon my father's ſpirits in relation to this choice. To ſay nothing of the natural workings of humanity and juſtice, or of the yearnings of parental and connubial love, all which prompted him, to leave

as

as little to hazard as poſſible in a caſe of this kind; ——he felt himſelf concerned in a particular manner, that all ſhould go right in the preſent caſe; ——from the accumulated ſorrow he lay open to, ſhould any evil betide his wife and child in lying-in at *Shandy-hal*.——He knew the world judged by events, and would add to his afflictions in ſuch a misfortune, by loading him with the whole blame of it. ——"Alas o'day!——had Mrs. *Shandy*, "poor gentlewoman! had but her wiſh in going up to "town, juſt to lye in and come down again,—— "which, they ſay, ſhe begged and prayed for upon her "bare knees,——and which, in my opinion, con- "ſidering the fortune which Mr. *Shandy* got with her, "——was no ſuch mighty matter to have complied "with, the lady and her babe might both of'em have "been alive at this hour."

This exclamation, my father knew, was unanſwerable;—and yet, it was not merely to ſhelter himſelf, ——nor was it altogether for care of his offſpring and wife that he ſeemed ſo extremely anxious about this point;——my father had extenſive views of things, ——and ſtood, moreover, as he thought, deeply concerned in it for the publick good, from the dread he entertained of the bad uſes an ill-fated inſtance might be put to.

He was very ſenſible that all political writers upon the ſubject had unanimouſly agreed and lamented, from the beginning of Queen *Elizabeth*'s reign down to his own time, that the current of men and money towards the metropolis, upon one frivolous errand or another, ——ſet in ſo ſtrong;——as to become dangerous to our civil rights;——tho', by the bye, ——a *current* was not the image he took moſt delight in,——a *diſtemper* was here his favourite metaphor, and he would run it down into a perfect allegory, by maintaining it was identically the ſame in the body national as in the body natural, where blood and ſpirits were driven up into the head faſter than they could find their ways down;——a ſtoppage of circulation muſt enſue, which was death in both caſes.

There was little danger, he would ſay, of loſing our liberties

liberties by *French* politicks or *French* invaſions;—nor was he ſo much in pain of a conſumption from the maſs of corrupted matter and ulcerated humours in our conſtitution,—which he hoped was not ſo bad as it was imagined;—but he verily feared, that in ſome violent puſh, we ſhould go off all at once in a ſtate apoplexy—and then he would ſay, *The Lord have mercy upon us all.*

My father was never able to give the hiſtory of this diſtemper,——without the remedy along with it.

"Was I an abſolute prince," he would ſay, pulling up his breeches with both his hands, as he roſe from his arm chair, "I would appoint able judges, at every "avenue of my metropolis, who ſhould take cognizance "of every fool s buſineſs who came there; and if, upon "a fair and candid hearing, it appeared not of weight "ſufficient to leave his own home, and come up, bag "and baggage, with his wife and children, farmers ſons, "*&c. &c.* at his backſide, they ſhould be all ſent back "from conſtable to conſtable, like vagrants as they "were, to the place of their legal ſettlements. By this "means, I ſhall take care, that my metropolis tottered "not thro' its own weight,—that the head be no lon-"ger too big for the body;—that the extreams, now "waſted and pinned in, be reſtored to their due ſhare "of nouriſhment, and regain with it, their natural "ſtrength and beauty:—I would effectually provide, "that the meadows and corn-fields, of my dominions, "ſhould laugh and ſing;—that good cheer and hoſpi-"tality flouriſh once more;—and that ſuch weight and "influence be put thereby into the hands of the Squi-"rality of my kingdom, as ſhould counterpoiſe what I "perceive my Nobility are now taking from them.

"Why are there ſo few palaces and gentlemens ſeats," he would aſk, with ſome emotion, as he walked acroſs the room, "throughout ſo many delicious pro-"vinces in *France?* Whence is it that the few remain-"ing *Chateaus* amongſt them are ſo diſmantled,—ſo un-"furniſhed, and in ſo ruinous and deſolate a condition? "Becauſe, Sir (he would ſay) in that kingdom no man "has any country intereſt to ſupport;—the little inte-"reſt of any kind, which any man has any where in it, "is concentered in the court, and the looks of the

"Grand

" Grand Monarch; by the ſun-ſhine of whoſe coun-
" tenance, or the clouds which paſs acroſs it, every
" *French* man lives or dies."

Another political reaſon, which prompted my father ſo ſtrongly to guard againſt the leaſt evil accident in my mother's lying-in in the country,——was, That any ſuch inſtance would infallibly throw a balance of power, too great already, into the weaker veſſels of the gentry, in his own, or higher ſtations;—which, with the many other uſurped rights which that part of the conſtitution was hourly eſtabliſhing,——would, in the end, prove fatal to the monarchical ſyſtem of domeſtick government, eſtabliſhed in the firſt creation of things by God.

In this point he was entirely of Sir *Robert Filmer's* opinion, that the plans and inſtitutions of the greateſt monarchies in the eaſtern parts of the world, were, originally, all ſtolen from that admirable pattern and prototype of this houſhold and paternal power;—— which, for a century, he ſaid, and more, had gradually been degenerating away into a mixed government;— the form of which, however deſirable in great combinations of the ſpecies,—was very troubleſome in ſmall ones,—and ſeldom produced any thing, that he ſaw, but ſorrow and confuſion.

For all theſe reaſons, private and publick, put together,——my father was for having the man-midwife by all means,—my mother by no means. My father begged and intreated, ſhe would for once recede from her prerogative in this matter, and ſuffer him to chooſe for her;—my mother, on the contrary, inſiſted upon her privilege in this matter, to chooſe for herſelf,— and have no mortal's help but the old woman's.—— What could my father do? He was almoſt at his wit's end;——talked it over with her in all moods;——— placed his arguments in all lights;———argued the matter with her like a chriſtian,——like a heathen,— like a huſband,——like a father,——like a patriot,— like a man:——My mother anſwered every thing only like a woman; which was a little hard upon her;—— for as ſhe could not aſſume and fight it out behind ſuch a variety of characters,——'twas no fair match;——

'twas

'twas ſeven to one.—What could my mother do?—She had the advantage (otherwiſe ſhe had been certainly overpowered) of a ſmall reinforcement of chagrine perſonal at the bottom, which bore her up and enabled her to diſpute the affair with my father with ſo equal an advantage,——that both ſides ſung *Te Deum*. In a word, my mother was to have the old woman,—and the operator was to have licenſe to drink a bottle of wine with my father, and my uncle *Toby Shandy*, in the back parlour,——for which he was to be paid five guineas.

I muſt beg leave, before I finiſh this chapter, to enter a caveat in the breaſt of my fair reader:—and it is this:—Not to take it abſolutely for granted from an unguarded word or two which I have dropped in it,—"That I am a married man."—I own the tender appellation of my dear, dear *Jenny*,—with ſome other ſtrokes of conjugal knowledge, interſperſed here and there, might, naturally enough, have miſled the moſt candid judge in the world into ſuch a determination againſt me.—All I plead for in this caſe, Madam, is ſtrict juſtice, and that you do ſo much of it to me, as well as to yourſelf,—as not to prejudge or receive ſuch an impreſſion of me, till you have better evidence, than I am poſitive, at preſent, can be produced againſt me:—Not that I can be ſo vain or unreaſonable, Madam, as to deſire you ſhould therefore think, that my dear, dear *Jenny*, is my kept miſtreſs,—no,—that would be flattering my character in the other extream, and giving it an air of freedom, which, perhaps, it has no kind of right to. All I contend for, is the utter impoſſibility, for ſome volumes, that you, or the moſt penetrating ſpirit upon earth, ſhould know how this matter really ſtands.—It is not impoſſible, but that my dear, dear *Jenny!* tender as the appellation is, may be my child,—Conſider—I was born in the year eighteen.—Nor is there any thing unnatural or extravagant in the ſuppoſition, that my dear *Jenny* may be my friend.—Friend:—My friend.——Surely, Madam, a friendſhip between the two ſexes may ſubſiſt, and be ſupported without—Fy! Mr. *Shandy*:—Without any thing, Madam, but that tender and delicious ſentiment,

which

which ever mixes in friendſhip where there is a difference of ſex. Let me entreat you to ſtudy the pure and ſentimental parts of the beſt *French* Romances;—— it will really, Madam, aſtoniſh you to ſee with what a variety of chaſte expreſſion this delicious ſentiment, which I have the honour to ſpeak of, is dreſſed out.

CHAP. XIX.

I WOULD ſooner undertake to explain the hardeſt problem in Geometry, than pretend to account for it, that a gentleman of my father's great good ſenſe,—knowing as the reader muſt have obſerved him, and curious too, in philoſophy,——wiſe alſo in political reaſoning,————and in polemical (as he will find) no way ignorant,————could be capable of entertaining a notion in his head, ſo out of the common track,————that I fear, the reader, when I come to mention it to him, if he is the leaſt of a cholerick temper, will immediately throw the book by; if mercurial, he will laugh moſt heartily at it;——and if he is of a grave and ſaturnine caſt, he will at firſt ſight, abſolutely condemn as fanciful and extravagant; and that was in reſpect to the choice and impoſition of Chriſtian names, on which he thought a great deal more depended than what ſuperficial minds were capable of conceiving.

His opinion, in this matter, was, That there was a ſtrange kind of magick bias, which good or bad names, as he called them, irreſiſtably impreſſed upon our characters and conduct.

The Hero of *Cervantes* argued not the point with more ſerioufneſs,—nor had he more faith,—or more to ſay on the power of Necromancy in diſhonouring his deeds,————or on DULCINEA's name, in ſhedding luſtre upon them, than my father had on thoſe of TRISMEGISTUS or ARCHIMEDES, on the one hand ——or of NYKY and SIMKIN on the other. How many CÆSARS and POMPEYS, he would ſay, by mere inſpiration of the names, have been rendered worthy of them? And how many, he would add, are there who might have done exceeding well in the world, had

not

not their characters and ſpirits been totally depreſſed and NICODEMUS'D into nothing.

I ſee plainly, Sir, by your looks, (or as the caſe happened) my father would ſay,—that you do not heartily ſubſcribe to this opinion of mine,—which to thoſe, he would add, who have not carefully ſifted it to the bottom,————I own has an air more of fancy than of ſolid reaſoning in it;————and yet, my dear Sir, if I may preſume to know your character, I am morally aſſured, I ſhould hazard little in ſtating a caſe to you—not as a party in the diſpute,—but as a judge, and truſting my appeal upon it to your own good ſenſe and candid diſquiſition in this matter;—you are a perſon free from as many narrow prejudices of education as moſt men;————and, if I may preſume to penetrate further into you,—of a liberality of genius above bearing down an opinion, merely becauſe it wants friends. Your ſon!—your dear ſon,—from whoſe ſweet and open temper you have ſo much to expect,—Your BILLY, Sir,————would you for the world have called him JUDAS?—Would you, my dear Sir, he would ſay, laying his hand upon your breaſt, with the genteeleſt addreſs,—and in that ſoft and irreſiſtable *piano* of voice, which the nature of the *argumentum ad hominem* abſolutely requires,—Would you, Sir, if a *Jew* of a godfather had propoſed the name for your child, and offered you his purſe along with it, would you have conſented to ſuch a deſecration of him?—O my God! he would ſay, looking up, if I know your temper right, Sir,—you are incapable of it;————you would have trampled upon the offer;————you would have thrown the temptation at the tempter's head with abhorrence.

Your greatneſs of mind in this action, which I admire, with that generous contempt of money, which you ſhew me in the whole tranſaction, is really noble;—and what renders it more ſo, is the principle of it:—the workings of a parent's love upon the truth and conviction of this very hypotheſis, namely, That was your ſon called JUDAS,——the ſordid and treacherous idea, ſo inſeparable from the name, would have accompanied him thro' life like his ſhadow, and, in the

end, made a miſer and a raſcal of him, in ſpight, Sir, of your example.

I never knew a man able to anſwer this argument—But, indeed, to ſpeak of my father as he was; he was certainly irreſiſtable, both in his orations and diſputations; he was born an orator;—θεοδίδακτος.—Perſuaſion hung upon his lips, and the elements of Logick and Rhetorick were ſo blended up in him,—and, withal, he had ſo ſhrewd a gueſs at the weakneſſes and paſſions of his reſpondent,———that NATURE might have ſtood up and ſaid,—"This man is eloquent." In ſhort, whether he was on the weak or the ſtrong ſide of the queſtion, 'twas hazardous in either caſe to attack him:———And yet, 'tis ſtrange, he had never read *Cicero*, nor *Quintilian de Oratore*, nor *Iſocrates*, nor *Ariſtotle*, nor *Longinus* amongſt the ancients;——— nor *Voſſius*, nor *Skioppius*, nor *Ramus*, nor *Farnaby* amongſt the moderns;———and what is more aſtoniſhing, he had never in his whole life the leaſt light or ſpark of ſubtilty ſtruck into his mind, by one ſingle lecture upon *Crackenthorp*, or *Burgerſdicius*, or any *Dutch* logician or commentator;——he knew not ſo much as in what the difference of an argument *ad ignorantiam*, and an argument *ad hominem* conſiſted; ſo that I well remember, when he went up along with me to enter my name at *Jeſus College* in ****,—it was a matter of juſt wonder with my worthy tutor, and two or three fellows of that learned ſociety, that a man who knew not ſo much as the names of his tools, ſhould be able to work after that faſhion with 'em.

To work with them in the beſt manner he could, was what my father was, however, perpetually forced upon;—for he had a thouſand little ſceptical notions of the comick kind to defend,—moſt of which notions, I verily believe, at firſt entered upon the footing of mere whims, and of a *vive la Bagatelle*; and as ſuch he would make merry with them for half an hour or ſo, and having ſharpened his wit upon 'em, diſmiſs them, till another day.

I mention this, not only as matter of hypotheſis or conjecture upon the progreſs and eſtabliſhment of my father's

father's many odd opinions, but as a warning to the learned reader againſt the indiſcreet reception of ſuch gueſts, who, after a free and undiſturbed entrance for ſome years, into our brains, at length claim a kind of ſettlement there,—working ſometimes like yeaſt;—but more generally after the manner of the gentle paſſion, beginning in jeſt,—but ending in downright earneſt.

Whether this was the caſe of the ſingularity of my father's notions, or that his judgment, at length, became the dupe of his wit; or how far, in many of his notions, he might, tho' odd, be abſolutely right;—the reader, as he comes at them, ſhall decide. All that I maintain here, is, that in this one, of the influence of Chriſtian names, however it gained footing, he was ſerious;—he was all uniformity;—he was ſyſtematical, and like all ſyſtematick reaſoners, he would move both heaven and earth, and twiſt and torture every thing in nature to ſupport his hypotheſis. In a word, I repeat it over again;—he was ſerious;—and, in conſequence of it, he would loſe all kind of patience whenever he ſaw people, eſpecially of condition, who ſhould have known better,—as careleſs and as indifferent about the name they impoſed upon their child,—or more ſo, than in the choice of *Ponto* or *Cupid* for their puppy dog.

This, he would ſay, looked ill;—and had, moreover, this particular aggravation in it, *viz.* That when once a vile name was wrongfully or injudiciouſly given, 'twas not like the caſe of a man's character, which, when wronged, might hereafter be cleared;—and, poſſibly, ſome time or other, if not in the man's life, at leaſt after his death,—be ſome how or other, ſet to rights with the world: But the injury of this, he would ſay, could never be undone;—nay, he doubted even whether an act of parliament could reach it:—He knew as well as you, that the legiſlature aſſumed a power over ſurnames;—but for very ſtrong reaſons, which he could give, it had never yet adventured, he would ſay, to go a ſtep further.

It was obſervable, that tho' my father, in conſequence of this opinion, had, as I have told you, the ſtrongeſt

likings and diſlikings towards certain names;—that there were ſtill numbers of names which hung ſo equally in the balance before him, that they were abſolutely indifferent to him. *Jack*, *Dick*, and *Tom* were of this claſs: Theſe my father called neutral names;—affirming of them, without a ſatyr, That there had been as many knaves and fools, at leaſt, as wiſe and good men, ſince the world began, who had indifferently borne them;—ſo that, like equal forces acting againſt each other in contrary directions, he thought they mutually deſtroyed each others effects; for which reaſon, he would often declare, He would not give a cherry-ſtone to chooſe amongſt them. *Bob*, which was my brother's name, was another of theſe neutral kinds of Chriſtian names, which operated very little either way; and as my father happened to be at *Epſom*, when it was given him, he would oft times thank heaven it was no worſe. *Andrew* was ſomething like a negative quantity in Algebra with him;—'twas worſe, he ſaid, than nothing. —*William* ſtood pretty high:—*Numps* again was low with him;—and *Nick*, he ſaid, was the DEVIL.

But, of all the names in the univerſe, he had the moſt unconquerable averſion for TRISTRAM;—he had the loweſt and moſt contemptible opinion of it of any thing in the world, thinking it could poſſibly produce nothing in *rerum natura*, but what was extremely mean and pitiful: So that in the midſt of a diſpute on the ſubject, in which, by the bye, he was frequently involved,—he would ſometimes break off in a ſudden and ſpirited EPIPHONEMA, or rather EROTESIS, raiſed a third, and ſometimes a full fifth, above the key of the diſcourſe, and demand it categorically of his antagoniſt, Whether he would take upon him to ſay, he had ever remembered,—whether he had ever read,—or even whether he had ever heard tell of a man, called *Triſtram*, performing any thing great or worth recording?——No—, he would ſay,——TRISTRAM!——The thing is impoſſible.

What could be wanting in my father but to have wrote a book to publiſh this notion of his to the world? Little boots it to the ſubtle ſpeculatiſt to ſtand ſingle in his opinions,—unleſs he gives them proper vent.—It

was

was the identical thing which my father did;—for in the year ſixteen, which was two years before I was born, he was at the pains of writing an expreſs DISSERTATION ſimply upon the word *Triſtram*,—ſhewing the world, with great candour and modeſty, the grounds of his great abhorrence to the name.

When this ſtory is compared with the title page,—Will not the gentle reader pity my father from his ſoul?—to ſee an orderly and well diſpoſed gentleman, who tho' ſingular,—yet inoffenſive in his notions,—ſo played upon in them by croſs purpoſes;—to look down upon the ſtage, and ſee him baffled and overthrown in all his little ſyſtems and wiſhes; to behold a train of events perpetually falling out againſt him, and in ſo critical and cruel a way, as if they had purpoſely been planned and pointed againſt him, merely to inſult his ſpeculations.——In a word, to behold ſuch a one, in his old age, ill fitted for troubles, ten times in a day ſuffering ſorrow;—ten times in a day calling the child of his prayers TRISTRAM!—Melancholy diſſyllable of ſound! which, to his ears, was uniſon to *Nicompoop*, and every name vituperative under heaven.—By his aſhes! I ſwear it,—if ever malignant ſpirit took pleaſure, or buſied itſelf in traverſing the purpoſes of mortal man,—it muſt have been here; and if it was not neceſſary I ſhould be born before I was chriſtened, I would this moment give the reader an account of it.

CHAP. XX.

———How could you, Madam, be ſo inattentive in reading the laſt chapter? I told you in it, *That my mother was not a papiſt.*—Papiſt! You told me no ſuch thing, Sir. Madam, I beg leave to repeat it over again, That I told you as plain at leaſt, as words, by direct inference, could tell you ſuch a thing.—Then, Sir, I muſt have miſſed a page.—No, Madam,—you have not miſſed a word.—Then, I was aſleep, Sir.—My pride, Madam, cannot allow you that refuge.—Then, I declare, I know nothing at all about the matter,—That, Madam, is the very fault I lay to your charge; and as a puniſhment for it, I do inſiſt upon it

that you immediately turn back, that is, as ſoon as you get to the next full ſtop, and read the whole chapter over again,

I have impoſed this penance upon the lady, neither out of wantonneſs or cruelty, but from the beſt of motives; and therefore ſhall make her no apology for it when ſhe returns back:—'Tis to rebuke a vicious taſte which has crept into thouſands beſides herſelf,—of reading ſtraight forwards, more in queſt of the adventures, than of the deep erudition and knowledge which a book of this caſt, if read over as it ſhould be, would infallibly impart with them.———The mind ſhould be accuſtomed to make wiſe reflections, and draw curious concluſions as it goes along; the habitude of which made *Pliny* the younger affirm, "That he never read a book ſo bad, but he drew ſome profit from it." The ſtories of *Greece* and *Rome*, run over without this turn and application,—do leſs ſervice, I affirm it, than the hiſtory of *Pariſmus* and *Pariſmenus*, or of the Seven Champions of *England*, read with it.

——But here comes my fair Lady. Have you read over again the chapter, Madam, as I deſired you?—You have: And did you not obſerve the paſſage, upon the ſecond reading, which admits the inference?———Not a word like it? Then, Madam, be pleaſed to ponder well the laſt line but one of the chapter, where I take upon me to ſay, "It was *neceſſary* I ſhould be born before I was chriſtened." Had my mother, Madam, been a Papiſt, that conſequence did not follow.*

It

* The Romiſh Rituals direct the baptizing of the child, in caſes of danger, before it is born;—but upon this proviſo, That ſome part or other of the child's body be ſeen by the baptizer;—But the Doctors of the Sorbonne by a deliberation held amongſt them, April 10, 1733, have enlarged the powers of the midwives, by determining, That tho' no part of the child's body ſhould appear,—that baptiſm ſhall, nevertheleſs, be adminiſtered to it by injection,—par le moyen d' une petite Canulle.—Anglice, a ſquirt,—'Tis very ſtrange that St. Thomas Aquinas, who had ſo good a mechanical head, both for tying and untying the knots of ſchool divinity,—ſhould, after ſo much pains beſtowed upon this—give

up

It is a terrible misfortune for this ſame book of mine, but more ſo to the Republick of Letters,——ſo that my own is quite ſwallowed up in the conſideration of it,———that this ſelf-ſame vile pruriency for freſh adventures in all things, has got ſo ſtrongly into our habit and humours,———and ſo wholly intent are we upon ſatisfying the impatience of our concupiſcence that way, that nothing but the groſs and more carnal parts of a compoſition will go down:——The ſubtle hints and ſly communication of ſcience fly off, like ſpirits, upwards;——the heavy moral eſcapes downwards; and both the one and the other are as much loſt to the world, as if they were ſtill left in the bottom of the ink-horn.

I wiſh the male reader has not paſſed by many a one as quaint and curious as this one, in which the female reader has been detected. I wiſh it may have its effects;—and that all good people, both male and female, from her example, may be taught to think as well as read.

MEMOIRE preſente a Meſſieurs les Docteurs de SORBONNE.

UN Chirurgien Accoucheur, repreſente a Meſſieurs les Docteurs de Sorbonne, *qu' il y a de cas, quoique tres rares, ou une mere ne ſçauroit accoucher, & meme ou l' enfant eſt tellement renferme dans le ſein de ſa mere, qu' il ne fait paroitre aucune partie de ſon corps; ce qui ſeroit un cas, ſuivant les Rituels, de lui conferer, du moins ſous condition, le bapteme. Le Chirurgien, qui conſulte, pretend par le moyen d'une* petit canulle, *de pouvoir baptiſer immediatement l' enfant, ſans faire aucun tort a la mere———Il demand ſi ce moyen, qu' il vient de propoſer, eſt permis & legitime, et s' il peut s' en ſervir dans le cas qu' il vient d' expoſer.*

up the point at laſt, as a ſecond La choſe impoſſible;—"Infantes in maternis uteris exiſtentes (quoth St. Thomas) baptizari poſſunt nullo modo."—O Thomas! Thomas!

If the reader has the curioſity to ſee the queſtion upon baptiſm, by injection, as preſented to the Doctors of the Sorbonne.——with their conſultation thereupon, it is as follows.

REPONSE.

LE Conſeil eſtime, que la queſtion propoſee ſouffre de grandes difficultes. Les Theologiens poſent d' un cote pour principe, que le bapteme, qui eſt une naiſſance ſpirituelle, ſuppoſe une premiere naiſſance ; il faut etre ne dans le monde, pour renaître en Jeſus Chriſt *comme ils l' enſeignent,* S. Thomas, 3 part. quæſt. 88. artic. 11. *ſuit cette doctrine comme une verite conſtante ; l' on ne peut, dit ce,* S. *Docteur, baptiſer les enfans qui ſont renfermes dans le ſein de leurs Meres, et* S. Thomas *eſt fonde ſur ce, que les enfans ne ſont point nes, & ne peuvent etre comptes parmi les autres hommes ; d' ou il conclud, qu'ils ne peuvent etre l' objet d' une action exterieure, pour recevoir par leur miniſtere les ſacremens neceſſaires au ſalut :* Pueri in maternis uteris exiſtentes nondum prodierunt in lucem ut cum aliis hominibus vitam ducant, unde non poſſunt ſubjici actioni humanæ, ut per eorum miniſterium ſacramenta recipiant ad ſalutem. *Les rituels, ordonnent dans la pratique ce que les theologiens ont etabli ſur les memes matieres, & ils defendent tous d' une maniere uniforme de baptiſer les enfans qui ſont renfermes dans le ſein de leurs meres, s' ils ne font paroitre quelque partie de leurs corps. Le concours des theologiens, & des rituels qui ſont les regeles des dioceſes, paroit former une autorite qui termine la queſtion preſente ; cependant le conſeil de conſcience conſiderant d' un cote, que le raiſonnement des theologiens eſt uniquement fonde ſur une raiſon de convenance, & que la defenſe des rituels, ſuppoſe que l' on ne peut baptiſer immediatement les enfans ainſi renfermes dans le ſein de leurs meres, ce qui eſt contre la ſuppoſition preſente ; & d' un autre cote, conſiderant que les memes theologiens enſeignent que l' on peut riſquer les ſacremens que* Jeſus Chriſt *a etablis comme des moyens faciles, mais neceſſaires pour ſanctifier les hommes ; & d' ailleurs eſtimant, que les enfans renfermes dans le ſein de leurs meres, pourroient etre capables de ſalut parce qu' ils ſont capables de damnation ; ——pour ces conſiderations, & eu egard a l' expoſe, ſuivant lequel on aſſure avoir trouve un moyen certain de baptiſer ces enfans ainſi renfermes ſans faire aucun tort a la mere, le Conſeil eſtime que il on pourroit ſe ſervir du*

moyen

moyen propoſe, dans la confiance qu' il a, que Dieu n' a point laiſſe ces ſortes d' enfans ſans aucuns ſecours & ſuppoſant, comme il eſt expoſe, que le moyen dont il s' agit eſt propre a leur procurer le bapteme ; cependant comme il s' agiroit, en autoriſant la pratique propoſee, de changer une regle univerſellement tablie, le Conſeil croit que celui qui conſulte doit s' adreſſer a ſon eveque, & a qui il appartient de juger de l' utilite, & du danger du moyen propoſe, & comme ſous le bon plaiſir de l' eveque, le conſeil eſtime qu'l faut droit recourir au Pape, qui a le droit d' expliquer les regles de egliſe, et d' y deroger dans les cas, ou la loi ne ſçauroit obliger, quelque ſage & quelque utile que paroiſſe la maniere de baptiſer dont il s' agit, le conſeil ne pourroit, l' approuver ſans le concours de ces deux autorites. On conſeil au moins a' celui qui conſulte, de s' adreſſer a ſon eveque, & de lui faire part de la preſente deciſion, afin que, ſi le prelat, entre dans les raiſons ſur lequelles les docteurs ſouſſignes s' appuyent, il puiſſe etre autoriſe dans le cas de neceſſite, ou il riſqueroit trop d' attendre que la permiſſion fut demandee & accordee d' employer le moyen qu' il propoſe ſi avantageux au ſalut de l' enfant. Au reſte le conſeile, en eſtimant que l' on pourroit s' en ſervir croit cependant, que ſi les enfans dont il s' agit, venoient au monde, contre l' eſperance, de ceux qui ſe ſeroint ſervis du meme moyen, il ſeroit neceſſaire de les baptiſer ſous condition, *& en cela le conſeil ſe conforme a tous les rituels, qui en autoriſant le bapteme d' un enfant qui fait paroitre quelque partie de ſon corps, enjoignent neanmoins, & ordonnent de le baptiſer* ſous condition, *s' il vient heureuſement au monde.*

Deliberé en *Sorbonne*, le 10 *Avril*, 1733.

A Le Moyne,
L. De Romigny,
De Marcilly.

Mr. *Triſtram Shandy*'s compliments to Meſſrs. *Le Moyne*, *De Romigny* and *De Marcilly*, hopes they all reſted well the night after ſo tireſome a conſultation. —He begs to know, whether, after the ceremony of marriage, and before that of conſummation, the bap-

tizing all the HOMUNCULI at once, ſlap-daſh, by *injection*, would not be a ſhorter and ſafer cut ſtill; on condition, as above, That if the HOMUNCULI do well and come ſafe into the world after this, That each and every of them ſhall be baptized again (*ſous condition*)—And provided, in the ſecond place, That the thing can be done, which Mr. *Shandy* apprehends it may, *par le moyne d' une* petite canulle, and, *ſans faire aucun tort a le mere.*

CHAP. XXI.

———I wonder what's all that noiſe, and running backwards and forwards for, above ſtairs, quoth my father, addreſſing himſelf, after an hour and a half's ſilence, to my uncle *Toby*,———who, you muſt know, was ſitting on the oppoſite ſide of the fire, ſmoaking his ſocial pipe, all the time in mute contemplation of a new pair of black pluſh breeches which he had got on;——What can they be doing brother? quoth my father,—we can ſcarce hear ourſelves talk.

I think, replied my uncle *Toby*, taking his pipe from his mouth, and ſtriking the head of it two or three times upon the nail of his left thumb, as he began his ſentence,——I think, ſays he:——But to enter rightly into my uncle *Toby*'s ſentiments upon this matter, you muſt be made to enter firſt a little into his character, the out-lines of which I ſhall juſt give you, and then the dialogues between him and my father, will go on as well again.

—Pray what was that man's name,—for I write in ſuch a hurry, I have no time to recollect or look for it, ——who firſt made the obſervation, "That there was great inconſtancy in our air and climate?" Whoever he was, 'twas a juſt and good obſervation in him. ———But the corollary drawn from it, namely, "That it is this which has furniſhed us with ſuch a variety of odd and whimſical characters;"———— that was not his;———it was found out by another man, at leaſt a century and a half after him: ———Then again,———that this copious ſtore-houſe of original materials, is the true and natural cauſe

cauſe that our comedies are ſo much better than thoſe of *France*, or any other that either have, or can be wrote upon the continent.——That diſcovery was not fully made till about the middle of king *William*'s reign,—when the great *Dryden* in writing one of his long prefaces, (if I miſtake not) moſt fortunately hit upon it. Indeed, towards the latter end of queen *Anne*, the great *Addiſon* began to patronize the notion, and more fully explained it to the world in one or two of his Spectators;—but the diſcovery was not his.——Then, fourthly and laſtly, that this ſtrange irregularity in our climate, producing ſo ſtrange an irregularity in our characters,——doth thereby, in ſome ſort, make us amends, by giving us ſomewhat to make us merry with when the weather will not ſuffer us to go out of doors,—that obſervation is my own;——and was ſtruck out by me this very rainy day, *March* 26, 1759, and betwixt the hours of nine and ten in the morning.

Thus,—thus, my fellow labourers and aſſociates in this great harveſt of our learning, now ripening before our eyes; thus it is, by ſlow ſteps of caſual increaſe, that our knowledge phyſical, metaphyſical, phyſiological polemical, nautical, mathematical, ænigmatical, technical, biographical, romantical, chemical, and obſtetrical, with fifty other branches of it, (moſt of 'em ending, as theſe do, in *ical*) have for theſe two laſt centuries and more, gradually been creeping upwards towards that Ακμη of their perfections, from which, if we may form a conjecture from the advances of theſe laſt ſeven years, we cannot poſſibly be far off.

When that happens, it is to be hoped, it will put an end to all kind of writings whatſoever;——the want of all kind of writing will put an end to all kind of reading;—and that in time, *As war begets poverty, poverty peace*,——muſt, in courſe put an end to all kind of knowledge,—and then——we ſhall have all to begin over again; or, in other words, be exactly where we ſtarted.

——Happy! thrice happy times! I only wiſh that the æra of my begetting, as well as the mode

and

and manner of it, had been a little altered,—or that it could have been put off with any convenience to my father or mother, for ſome twenty or five and twenty years longer, when a man in the literary world might have ſtood ſome chance.—

But I forget my uncle *Toby*, whom all this while we have left knocking the aſhes out of his tobacco pipe.

His humour was of that particular ſpecies, which does honour to our atmoſphere; and I ſhould have made no ſcruple of ranking him amongſt one of the firſt-rate productions of it, had not there appeared too many ſtrong lines in it of a family-likeneſs, which ſhewed that he derived the ſingularity of his temper more from blood, than either wind or water, or any modification or combination of them whatever: And I have, therefore, oft times wondered, that my father, tho' I believe he had his reaſons for it, upon his obſerving ſome tokens of excentricity in my courſe when I was a boy,—ſhould never once endeavour to account for them in this way; for all the SHANDY FAMILY were of an original character throughout;———I mean the males,——the females had no character at all,——except, indeed, my great aunt DINAH, who, about ſixty years ago, was married and got with child by the coachman, for which my father, according to his hypotheſis of chriſtian names, would often ſay, She might thank her godfathers and godmothers.

It will ſeem very ſtrange,———and I would as ſoon think of dropping a riddle in the reader's way, which is not my intereſt to do, as ſet him upon gueſſing how it could come to paſs, that an event of this kind, ſo many years after it had happened, ſhould be reſerved for the interruption of the peace and unity, which otherwiſe ſo cordially ſubſiſted, between my father and my uncle *Toby*. One would have thought, that the whole force of the misfortune ſhould have ſpent and waſted itſelf in the family at firſt,———as is generally the caſe:——But nothing ever wrought with our family after the ordinary way. Poſſibly at the very time this happened, it might have ſomething elſe to afflict it; and as afflictions are ſent down for our good, and that as this had never done the SHANDY FAMILY

any

any good at all, it might lie waiting till apt times and circumſtances ſhould give it an opportunity to diſcharge its office.——————Obſerve, I determine nothing upon this.——————My way is ever to point out to the curious, different tracts of inveſtigation, to come at the firſt ſprings of the events I tell;——————not with a pedantic *Feſcue*,——————or in the deciſive manner of *Tacitus*, who outwits himſelf and his reader;——————but with the officious humility of a heart devoted to the aſſiſtance merely of the inquiſitive;——————to them I write,——————and by them I ſhall be read,——————if any ſuch reading as this could be ſuppoſed to hold out ſo long, to the very end of the world.

Why this cauſe of ſorrow, therefore, was thus reſerved for my father and uncle, is undetermined by me. But how and in what direction it exerted itſelf, ſo as to become the cauſe of diſſatisfaction between them, after it began to operate, is what I am able to explain with great exactneſs, and is as follows:

My uncle TOBY SHANDY, Madam, was a gentleman, who with the virtues which uſually conſtitute the character of a man of honour and rectitude, poſſeſſed one in a very eminent degree, which is ſeldom or never put into the catalogue; and that was a moſt extream and unparalleled modeſty of nature;——————tho' I correct the word nature, for this reaſon, that I may not prejudge a point which muſt ſhortly come to a hearing; and that is, whether this modeſty of his was natural or acquired.——————Which ever way my uncle *Toby* came by it, 'twas nevertheleſs modeſty in the trueſt ſenſe of it; and that is, Madam, not in regard to words, for he was ſo unhappy as to have very little choice in them,—but to things;—and this kind of modeſty ſo poſſeſſed him, and it aroſe to ſuch a height in him, as almoſt to equal, if ſuch a thing could be, even the modeſty of a woman: That female nicety, Madam, and inward cleanlineſs of mind and fancy, in your ſex, which makes you ſo much the awe of ours.

You will imagine, Madam, that my uncle *Toby* had contracted all this from this very ſource;——that he had ſpent a great part of his time in converſe with your ſex; and that from a thorough knowledge of you, and the

the force of imitation which ſuch fair examples render irreſiſtable,———he had acquired this amiable turn of mind.

I wiſh I could ſay ſo,———for unleſs it was with his ſiſter-in-law, my father's wife and my mother,——— my uncle *Toby* ſcarce exchanged three words with the ſex in as many years;———no, he got it, Madam, by a blow.——A blow! Yes, Madam, it was owing to a blow from a ſtone, broke off by a ball from the parapet of a horn-work at the ſiege of *Namur*, which ſtruck full upon my uncle *Toby*'s groin.———Which way could that effect it? The ſtory of that, Madam, is long and intereſting;———but it would be running my ſtory all upon heaps to give it you here.—'Tis for an epiſode hereafter; and every circumſtance relating to it in its proper place, ſhall be faithfully laid before you:—Till then, it is not in my power to give further light into this matter, or ſay more than what I have ſaid already,—That my uncle *Toby* was a gentleman of unparalleled modeſty, which happening to be ſomewhat ſubtilized and rarified by the conſtant heat of a little family pride, they both ſo wrought together within him, that he could never bear to hear the affair of my aunt DINAH touched upon, but with the greateſt emotion.——The leaſt hint of it was enough to make the blood fly into his face;—but when my father enlarged upon the ſtory in mixed companies, which the illuſtration of his hypotheſis frequently obliged him to do,——— the unfortunate blight of one of the faireſt branches of the family, would ſet my uncle *Toby*'s honour and modeſty a bleeding, and he would often take my father aſide, in the greateſt concern imaginable, to expoſtulate and tell him, he would give him any thing in the world only to let the ſtory reſt.

My father, I believe, had the trueſt love and tenderneſs for my uncle *Toby*, that ever one brother bore towards another, and would have done any thing in nature, which one brother in reaſon could have deſired of another, to have made my uncle *Toby*'s heart eaſy in this or any other point. But this lay out of his power.

——My father, as I told you, was a philoſopher in grain:—ſpeculative,—ſyſtematical;——and my aunt

Dinah's

Dinah's affair was a matter of as much conſequence to him, as the retrogradation of the planets to *Copernicus:* ——The backſlidings of *Venus* in her orbit fortified the *Copernican* ſyſtem, called ſo after his name; and the backſlidings of my aunt *Dinah* in her orbit, did the ſame ſervice in eſtabliſhing my father's ſyſtem, which, I truſt, will for ever hereafter be called the *Shandean Syſtem*, after his.

In any other family diſhonour, my father, I believe, had as nice a ſenſe of ſhame as any man whatever;—and neither he, nor I dare ſay *Copernicus*, would have divulged the affair in either caſe, or have taken the leaſt notice of it to the world, but for the obligations they owed, as they thought, to truth.—*Amicus Plato*, my father would ſay, conſtruing the words to my uncle *Toby*, as he went along, *Amicus Plato*; that is, DINAH was my aunt;—*ſed magis amica veritas*—but TRUTH is my ſiſter.

This contrariety of humours betwixt my father and my uncle, was the ſource of many a fraternal ſquabble. The one could not bear to hear the tale of family diſgrace recorded,—and the other would ſcarce ever let a day paſs to an end without ſome hint of it.

For God's ſake, my uncle *Toby* would cry,——and for my ſake, and for all our ſakes, my dear brother *Shandy*,—do let this ſtory of our aunt's and her aſhes ſleep in peace;——how can you,——how can you have ſo little feeling and compaſſion for the character of our family:——What is the character of a family to an hypotheſis? My father would reply. ——Nay, if you come to that——what is the life of a family?——The life of a family! ——My uncle *Toby* would ſay, throwing himſelf back in his arm-chair and lifting up his hands, his eyes, and one leg.—Yes the life,——my father would ſay, maintaining his point. How many thouſands of them are there every year that comes, caſt away (in all civilized countries at leaſt)——and conſidered as nothing but common air, in competition of an hypotheſis. In my plain ſenſe of things, my uncle *Toby*, would anſwer,——every ſuch inſtance is downright MURDER, let who will commit it.——There lies

lies your miſtake, my father would reply;——for, in *Foro Scientiæ* there is no ſuch thing as MURDER,—'tis only DEATH, brother.

My uncle *Toby* would never offer to anſwer this by any other kind of argument, than that of whiſtling half a dozen bars of *Lillabullero*.——You muſt know it was the uſual channel thro' which his paſſions got vent, when any thing ſhocked or ſurprized him;—but eſpecially when any thing which he deemed very abſurd was offered.

As not one of our logical writers, nor any of the commentators upon them, that I remember, have thought proper to give a name to this particular ſpecies of argument,—I here take the liberty to do it myſelf for two reaſons. Firſt, That, in order to prevent all confuſion in diſputes, it may ſtand as much diſtinguiſhed for ever, from every other ſpecies of argument,—as the *Argumentum ad Verecundiam*, *ex Abſurdo*, *ex Fortiori*, or any other argument whatſoever:—And, ſecondly, That it may be ſaid by my children's children, when my head is laid to reſt,——that their learned grandfather's head had been buſied to as much purpoſe once, as other people's:—That he had invented a name,—and generouſly thrown it into the TREASURY of the *Ars Logica*, for one of the moſt unanſwerable arguments in the whole ſcience. And if the end of diſputation is more to ſilence than convince,——they may add, if they pleaſe, to one of the beſt arguments too.

I do therefore by theſe preſents, ſtrictly order and command, That it be known and diſtinguiſhed by the name and title of the *Argumentum Fiſtulatorium*, and no other;—and that it rank hereafter with the *Argumentum Baculinum*, and the *Argumentum ad Crumenam*, and for ever hereafter be treated of in the ſame chapter.

As for the *Argumentum Tripodium*, which is never uſed but by the woman againſt the man;——and the *Argumentum ad Rem*, which, contrary-wiſe, is made uſe of by the man only againſt the woman:——As theſe two are enough in conſcience for one lecture;—and, moreover, as the one is the beſt anſwer to the other,—let them likewiſe be kept apart, and be treated of in a place by themſelves.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

THE learned Biſhop *Hall*, I mean the famous Dr. *Joſeph Hall*, who was biſhop of *Exeter* in King *James* the firſt's reign, tells us in one of his *Decades*, at the end of his Divine art of meditation, imprinted at *London*, in the year 1610, by *John Beal*, dwelling in *Alderſgate ſtreet*, "That it is an abominable thing for a man to commend himſelf;"—and I really think it is ſo.

And yet on the other hand, when a thing is executed in a maſterly kind of a faſhion, which thing is not likely to be found out;—I think it is full as abominable, that a man ſhould loſe the honour of it, and go out of the world with the conceit of it rotting in his head.

This is preciſely my ſituation.

For in this long digreſſion which I was accidentally led into, as in all my digreſſions (one only excepted) there is a maſter-ſtroke of digreſſive ſkill, the merit of which has all along, I fear, been overlooked by my reader,—not for want of penetration in him,——but becauſe it is an excellence ſeldom looked for, or expected indeed, in a digreſſion; and it is this: That tho' my digreſſions are all fair, as you obſerve,——and that I fly off from what I am about, as far and as often too as any writer in *Great Britain*; yet I conſtantly take care to order affairs ſo, that my main buſineſs does not ſtand ſtill in my abſence.

I was juſt going, for example, to have given you the great out-lines of my uncle *Toby*'s moſt whimſical character;——when my aunt *Dinah* and the coachman came acroſs us, and led us a vagary ſome millions of miles into the very heart of the planetary ſyſtem: Notwithſtanding all this, you perceive that the drawing of my uncle *Toby*'s character went on gently all the time;——not the great contours of it,———that was impoſſible,—but ſome familiar ſtrokes and faint deſignations of it, were here and there touched in, as we went along, ſo that you are much better acquainted with my uncle *Toby* now than you was before.

By

By this contrivance the machinery of my work is of a ſpecies by itſelf; two contrary motions are introduced into it, and reconciled, which were thought to be at variance with each other. In a word, my work is digreſſive, and it is progreſſive too,——and at the ſame time.

This, Sir, is a very different ſtory from that of the earth's moving round her axis, in her diurnal rotation, with her progreſs in her elliptick orbit which bring about the year, and conſtitutes that variety and viciſſitude of ſeaſons we enjoy;——though I own it ſuggeſted the thought,——as I believe the greateſt of our boaſted improvements and diſcoveries have come from ſome ſuch trifling hints.

Digreſſions, inconteſtably, are the ſun-ſhine;——they are the life, the ſoul of reading;——take them out of this book for inſtance,—you might as well take the book along with them;—one cold eternal winter would reign in every page of it;—reſtore them to the writer;——he ſteps forth like a bridegroom,——bids all hail; brings in variety, and forbids the appetite to fail.

All the dexterity is in the good cookery and management of them, ſo as to be not only for the advantage of the reader, but alſo of the author, whoſe diſtreſs in this matter is truly pitiable;——For if he begins a digreſſion,——from that moment, I obſerve, his whole work ſtands ſtock-ſtill;——and if he goes on with his main work,——then there is an end of his digreſſion.

—This is vile work—For which reaſon, from the beginning of this, you ſee, I have conſtructed the main work and the adventitious parts of it with ſuch interſections, and have ſo complicated and involved the digreſſiveand progreſſive movements, one wheel within another, that the whole machine, in general, has been kept a going;—and, what's more, it ſhall be kept a going theſe forty years, if it pleaſes the fountain of health to bleſs me ſo long with life and good ſpirits.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

I HAVE a ſtrong propenſity in me to begin this chapter very nonſenſically, and I will not balk my fancy.——— Accordingly I ſet off thus.

If the fixture of *Momus*'s glaſs, in the human breaſt, according to the propoſed emendation of that arch-critick, had taken place,———firſt, This fooliſh conſequence would certainly have followed,——— That the very wiſeſt and the very graveſt of us all, in one coin or other, muſt have paid window-money every day of our lives.

And, ſecondly, That had the ſaid glaſs been there ſet up, nothing more would have been wanting, in order to have taken a man's character, but to have taken a chair and gone ſoftly, as you would to a dioptrical bee-hive, and looked in,—viewed the ſoul ſtark naked;—obſerv'd all her motions,—her machinations traced all her maggots from their firſt engendering to their crawling forth;——watched her looſe in her friſks, her gambols, her capricios: and after ſome notice of her more ſolemn deportment, conſequent upon ſuch friſks, *&c.*———then taken your pen and ink and ſet down nothing but what you had ſeen, and could have ſworn to:———But this is an advantage not to be had by the biographer in this planet,——in the planet *Mercury* (belike) it may be ſo, if not better ſtill for him;———for there the intenſe heat of the country, which is proved by computators, from it's vicinity to the ſun, to be more than equal to that of red hot iron,—muſt, I think, long ago, have vitrified the bodies of the inhabitants, (as the efficient cauſe) to ſuit them for the climate (which is the final cauſe;) ſo that, betwixt them both, all the tenements of their ſouls, from top to bottom, may be nothing elſe, for aught the ſoundeſt philoſophy can ſhew to the contrary, but one fine tranſparent body of clear glaſs (bating the umbilical knot;)———ſo, that till the inhabitants grow old and tolerably wrinkled, whereby the rays of light in paſſing thro' them, become ſo monſtrouſly refracted,——or return reflected from their ſurfaces

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in ſuch tranſverſe lines to the eye, that a man cannot be ſeen thro'; ——his ſoul might as well, unleſs, for mere ceremony,——or the trifling advantage which the umbilical point gave her,—might, upon all other accounts, I ſay, as well play the fool out o'doors as in her own houſe.

But this, as I ſaid above, is not the caſe of the inhabitants of this earth;—our minds ſhine not through the body, but are wrapt up here in a dark covering of uncriſtalized fleſh and blood; ſo that if we would come to the ſpecifick characters of them, we muſt go ſome other way to work.

Many, in good truth, are the ways which human wit has been forced to take to do this thing with exactneſs.

Some, for inſtance, draw all their characters with wind inſtruments—*Virgil* takes notice of that way in the affair of *Dido* and *Æneas*—but it is as fallacious as the breath of fame;——and, moreover, beſpeaks a narrow genius. I am not ignorant that the *Italians* pretend to a mathematical exactneſs, in their deſignations of one particular ſort of character among them, from the *forte* or *piano* of a certain wind inſtrument they uſe,——which they ſay is infallible.—I dare not mention the name of the inſtrument in this place;—'tis ſufficient we have it amongſt us,——but never think of making a drawing by it;——this is ænigmatical, and intended to be ſo, at leaſt, *ad populum*:——And therefore I beg, Madam, when you come here, that you read on as faſt as you can, and never ſtop to make any enquiry about it.

There are others again, who will draw a man's character from no other helps in the world, but merely from his evacuations;——but this often gives a very incorrect out-line,——unleſs, indeed, you take a ſketch of his repletions too; and by correcting one drawing from the other, compound one good figure out of them both.

I ſhould have no objection to this method, but that I think it muſt ſmell too ſtrong of the lamp,—and be rendered ſtill more operoſe, by forcing you to have an

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eye to the reſt of his *Non-Naturals*.—Why the moſt natural actions of a man's life ſhould be called his Non-Naturals,—is another queſtion.

There are others, fourthly, who diſdain every one of theſe expedients;—not from any fertility of their own, but from the various ways of doing it, which they have borrowed from the honourable devices which the Pentagraphic Brethren * of the bruſh have ſhewn in taking copies.—Theſe, you muſt know, are your great hiſtorians.

One of theſe you will ſee drawing a full length character *againſt the light*;—that's illiberal,—diſhoneſt,—and hard upon the character of the man who ſits.

Others, to mend the matter, will make a drawing of you in the *Camera*;—that is moſt unfair of all,—becauſe, *there* you are ſure to be repreſented in ſome of your moſt ridiculous attitudes.

To avoid all and every one of theſe errors, in giving you my uncle *Toby*'s character, I am determined to draw it by no mechanical help whatever;—nor ſhall my pencil be guided by any one wind inſtrument which ever was blown upon, either on this, or on the other ſide of the *Alps*;—nor will I conſider either his repletions or his diſcharges,—or touch upon his Non-Naturals;—but, in a word, I will draw my uncle *Toby*'s character from his HOBBY-HORSE.

CHAP. XXIV.

IF I was not morally ſure that the reader muſt be out of all patience for my uncle *Toby*'s character,—I would here previouſly have convinced him, that there is no inſtrument ſo fit to draw ſuch a thing with, as that which I have pitched upon.

A man and his HOBBY-HORSE, tho' I cannot ſay that they act and re-act exactly after the ſame manner in which the ſoul and body do upon each other: Yet doubtleſs there is a communication between them of ſome kind, and my opinion rather is, that there is ſome-

* Pentagraph, an inſtrument to copy prints and pictures mechanically, and in proportion.

ſomething in it more of the manner of the electrified bodies,—and that by means of the heated parts of the rider, which come immediately into contact with the back of the HOBBY-HORSE.—By long journies and much friction, it ſo happens that the body of the rider is at length filled as full of HOBBY-HORSICAL matter as it can hold;—ſo that if you are able to give but a clear deſcription of the nature of the one, you may form a pretty exact notion of the genius and character of the other.

Now the HOBBY-HORSE which my uncle *Toby* always rode upon, was, in my opinion, an HOBBY-HORSE well worth giving a deſcription of, if it was only upon the ſcore of his great ſingularity; for you might have travelled from *York* to *Dover*,—from *Dover* to *Penzance* in *Cornwall*, and from *Penzance* to *York* back again, and not have ſeen ſuch another upon the road; or if you had ſeen ſuch a one, whatever haſte you had been in, you muſt infallibly have ſtopped to have taken a view of him. Indeed, the gait and figure of him was ſo ſtrange, and ſo utterly unlike was he, from his head to his tail, to any one of the whole ſpecies, that it was now and then made a matter of diſpute,————whether he was really a HOBBY-HORSE or no: But as the philoſopher would uſe no other argument to the ſceptic, who diſputed with him againſt the reality of motion, ſave that of riſing up upon his legs, and walking a croſs the room:—ſo would my uncle *Toby* uſe no other argument to prove his HOBBY-HORSE was a HOBBY-HORSE indeed, but by getting upon his back and riding him about;—leaving the world after that to determine the point as it thought fit.

In good truth, my uncle *Toby* mounted him with ſo much pleaſure, and he carried my uncle *Toby* ſo well,—that he troubled his head very little with what the world either ſaid or thought about it.

It is now high time, however, that I give you a deſcription of him:—But to go on regularly, I only beg you will give me leave to acquaint you firſt, how my uncle *Toby* came by him.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

THE wound in my uncle *Toby*'s groin, which he received at the ſiege of *Namur*, rendering him unfit for the ſervice, it was thought expedient he ſhould return to *England*, in order, if poſſible, to be ſet to rights.

He was four years totally confined,—part of it to his bed, and all of it to his room; and in the courſe of his cure, which was all that time in hand, ſuffered unſpeakable miſeries,—owing to a ſucceſſion of exfoliations from the *os pubis*, and the outward edge of that part of the *coxendix* called the *os illeum*,—both which bones were diſmally cruſhed, as much by the irregularity of the ſtone which I told you was broke off the parapet,—as by its ſize,——(tho' it was pretty large) which inclined the ſurgeon all along to think, that the great injury which it had done my uncle *Toby*'s groin, was more owing to the gravity of the ſtone itſelf, than to the projectile force of it;—which he would often tell him was a great happineſs.

My father at that time was juſt beginning buſineſs in *London*, and had taken a houſe;—and as the trueſt friendſhip and cordiality ſubſiſted between the two brothers,—and that my father thought my uncle *Toby* could no where be ſo well nurſed and taken care of as in his own houſe, he aſſigned him the very beſt appartment in it.—And what was a much more ſincere mark of his affection ſtill, he would never ſuffer a friend or any acquaintance to ſtep into the houſe on any occaſion, but he would take him by the hand, and lead him up ſtairs to ſee his brother *Toby*, and chat an hour by his bed ſide.

The hiſtory of a ſoldier's wound beguiles the pain of it—my uncle's viſitors at leaſt thought ſo, and in their daily calls upon him, from the courteſy ariſing out of that belief, they would frequently turn the diſcourſe to that ſubject, and from that ſubject the diſcourſe would generally roll on to the ſiege itſelf.

Theſe converſations were infinitely kind; and my uncle *Toby* received great relief from them, and would have

have received much more, but that they brought him into ſome unforeſeen perplexities, which, for three months together retarded his cure greatly; and if he had not hit upon an expedient to extricate himſelf out of them, I verily believe they would have laid him in his grave.

What theſe perplexities of my uncle *Toby* were,—'tis impoſſible for you to gueſs;——if you could,——I ſhould bluſh; not as a relation,——not as a man,—nor even as a woman,—but I ſhould bluſh as an author; inaſmuch as I ſet no ſmall ſtore by myſelf upon this very account, that my reader has never yet been able to gueſs at any thing. And in this, Sir, I am of ſo nice and ſingular a humour, that if I thought you was able to form the leaſt judgment or probable conjecture to yourſelf, of what was to come in the next page,—I would tear it out of my book.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.